

# The Christian Scholar

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National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America

**THE CHRISTIAN SCHOLAR**  
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The purpose of the Commission on Christian Higher Education is to develop basic philosophy and requisite programs within its assigned field; to awaken the entire public to the conviction that religion is essential to a complete education and that education is necessary in the achievement of progress; to foster a vital Christian life in college and university communities of the United States of America; to strengthen the Christian college, to promote religious instruction therein, and to emphasize the permanent necessity of higher education under distinctly Christian auspices.

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## The Editor's Preface

When persons of acute awareness and deep concern — whether they are Christians or “emancipated” — begin asking probing questions of the contemporary college and university, and questions about the root meanings of their own lives and work in academic communities, one may expect some “shaking of the foundations.” The persons are likely to be those who refuse to accept the premise that the educational institution is only a means of being employed. They reject the notion that the true academic community can merely drift along in the hope that its embodiment in the university will somehow, and in the nick of time, be redeemed either by the securities of the academic traditions, or by solid, if compartmentalized, scholarship, or even by God! They see the many diversionary pressures within and upon the university, the haunting suspicion that much of contemporary scholarship is mediocre, the mimicing of technology by all the intellectual disciplines, the absence of time and of quiet just to think again, and the even more conspicuous absence of controversy over fundamental issues: they see all these as forces which scoop out the soil from beneath the very foundations upon which the university stands. And, given a grain of theological good sense, they often see the whole malaise of the intellectual enterprise covered over with honey-smooth goodness and conforming religiosity!

There are many, including some persons of awareness and concern, who view such a description as exaggerated and as a caricature of the beloved aca-

demic community. Even when they may see clearly the forces at work in contemporary civilization, and even when they may know that the societal and cultural context is likely to be reflected in the college and university, they may tend still to insist upon the fundamental integrity of the academic community, its essentially good health, and its capacities to move above and beyond even the situations in which it is set. In their idealism they may revise Isaiah's confession slightly to read: “We are a people of clean lips and we dwell in the midst of an unclean people.”

Prophetic, critical, and reassessing voices have often been heard in the academic lands in recent years. Analysis and redefinition of the nature and function of a university, of its major cultural roots and humane traditions, of the diversities of intellectual streams which converge in it, and of the special responsibilities which weigh heavily upon it in our day — these have been undertaken repeatedly during the past ten to fifteen years. New cultural challenges have appeared, theology as a basic perspective on human life and history, we say, has been “in renaissance,” and we have been brought starkly up against the bankruptcies of inadequate or fuzzy views of man, knowledge, and society. Moberly, Nash, Coleman, and a number of others have been heard from, with perception, brilliance, and a prophetic note. Yet, many of us have not been able to read as we have had to listen to other and more persistent or more immediate voices which were not of Cephas and Paul but

of Dewey or Hutchins or Comte or even the Buddha! Still others of us feel that we have been admonished and exhorted (or been involved in admonishing and exhorting, even by way of the pages of *The Christian Scholar*) about our responsibilities as Christians. But we have arrived at our classroom at 9:02 on a Monday morning or at our study at 10:15 some evening after a Divisional lecture by a visiting fireman and we know we have had it! How teach as Christians? How write the next four pages of the manuscript now over-due with the publisher as those who would be obedient to Christ and His Lordship, even over the university? How get a student or a colleague even to think iconoclastically and controversially in our day of homogenized living, in which, as someone said, "the bland are leading the bland?"

Does all this, however, dictate the need of accepting the given situation and of giving up the probing and disturbing question? Must the symbol of the gad-fly be replaced with the symbol of the crayfish? Perhaps there are no ready and agreed-upon answers, but is it not worth-while to continue to live with some questions? We have some exploring to do — of our humane tradition, of the wealth of constructive thought which today can be brought to the service of the academic enterprise, of our various intellectual and theological traditions, and of the opportunities which are ours in the colleges and universities today to find new ways to live on and break through the frontiers of a new and a better day! We have some conversations to get

underway, some concrete issues and problems of the college and university to look at with open eyes, and a whole field of scholarship still to get into in the relationships between the Christian message and the intellectual disciplines. We have some serious ills in the body of modern society to diagnose and to take seriously, we have some apologetics on behalf of our Christian faith to set within the context of what we hear as we get an ear to the ground of the campus, and we have some quiet to find for prayer and the worship of God. The issues today are, to be sure, more complex even than Nash, Coleman, and Moberly imagined; the assessment of the situation of the Christian in the university must be undertaken anew daily; the university, rather than presenting us a fixed and an eternal idea, is to be accepted as the given reality in which we must with diligence discover our obedience of God.

These are among the concerns which prompted the preparation of this number of *The Christian Scholar*. It brings into relation or contrast a number of diverse viewpoints on some of the central issues not only for Christians and churches but for all those who with sensitivity inhabit the halls of higher learning. Some of the articles deal with the college or university as an academic community, while others give more particular attention to the teacher and his opportunities. We offer this issue as an ingredient in the conversations and as an invitation to explore further the Christian's response to the specific place where God has called him to obedience, witness, and service.



## The College as a Community

DOUGLAS M. KNIGHT

I have been asked to concern myself with the inner nature of a college community, and I have been able to discover only one reason for my doing so: undoubtedly I shall have to reveal myself as a horrible example of what is wrong with college communities today — of the self-confusion and the gap between inward conviction and the acting-out of conviction, between an assurance that what we have to offer is supremely important and a profound bafflement not only over how to interpret it to our society but how to interpret it to ourselves. These are obvious problems; but if this article is to be of any use, it may be by putting the obvious problems in some light that will suggest which ones we can do something about and which ones will have to do something about us.

As a result, I shall come at these vexed and at the same time faintly shopworn questions not as the newspapers and trade journals come at them but as such questions compel us to revisit our own central purposes, as they have an impact, in short, on the college itself, and as they can help the college to find itself.

We can say this, at least, about ourselves: never have so many colleges spent so much time and money (often other people's money) contemplating the academic navel. If the way of discovery is introspection, we're in! It's remotely possible, of course, that our self-studies only look at what we want to see — that we are asking for the mystic's vision without his discipline. This is much too simple an explanation, naturally, for all the 500-page reports that have issued in five-word results; but there is some truth, at least, in the observation that we are happy indeed to write about what we *might* do, so long as it does not commit us very deeply to what we must do.

It is fashionable in some quarters to account for this gap between word and act in the colleges as a function of the collapse of individual conviction on the part of faculty members. If they only had faith in this or that, so the argument runs — faith in free enterprise, faith in government control of the economy, even faith in Christianity—then the college would be an understandable and acceptable community.

Now these are the most naive forms of a certain attitude toward the college community, and one probably meets them head-on only in presidential nightmares about boards of trustees. But I wonder a little if we aren't meeting a far more sophisticated form of exactly this same attitude when we listen to the analyses of Sir Walter Moberly or Mr. Arnold Nash. I would not for a moment want to detract

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Dr. Douglas M. Knight is President of Lawrence College in Appleton, Wisconsin. He presented the substance of this article in an address at the Week of Work of the National Council on Religion in Higher Education in August of 1956. Dr. Knight, a Fellow of this Council, was formerly a member of the Editorial Board of *The Christian Scholar*.

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from the credit which goes to both of them for their insight about the historical root of the liberal college, the sense in which it establishes itself through the Christian conviction of the importance of human individuality — not human eccentricity but what Gordon Chalmers has written of as the common and shared value of individuals.

Where Moberly and Nash join hands with the nightmarish trustee is in their assumption that, if certain things were to happen, *then* colleges would be able to "stand firm in the shifting tides of current opinion" (to use the cliché for it). In this hope they share a good deal with the expectations which certain church groups have of the colleges related to them. Last year, like many of you, I received from Nashville an issue of the Methodist publication *Trustee* which included a check-list of questions which Boards of Trustees might ask in order to determine whether their colleges were on the right track. Twelve of the **thirteen questions** had little to do with the life of the mind, and several of them implied — unwittingly, I am sure — the encouragement of measures for admission and life in college which would result in pious freshmen and equally pious seniors. The way to solve the really difficult problems of spiritual life in the colleges is to go around them, and the way to solve the really difficult problems of today's college community is equally for many critics to go around them.

I am so positive in my objection for one reason beyond all others: it is extremely difficult to see how one could accomplish what these critics have in mind, unless the nature of contemporary intellectual life were something quite different from what it is. There is not much point in talking about a Christian college unless or until we can settle the question of what a college itself is, does, and should do, now and in our own society. We must reckon with the fact, to take just one example, that our atheist colleagues who believe in the importance of human individuality can sustain the relevance of their position emotionally even if they cannot give it a full logical substructure and an eschatology. The central questions of the college as a community are not those which root themselves outside it and then sit in judgment on it. They are those which exist within the college but are often unrecognized in their true nature or their true possibility. And our best evidence for them therefore lies in what has actually taken place during the last ten or fifteen years — or, if we wish to extend our range, during the last 150 or the last thousand. The time-span is not crucial, but the fact that we are looking at colleges not as adjuncts but as something with an existence of their own *is* absolutely crucial. No matter what they contribute to spiritual life they are not mere adjuncts to the church; no matter whom they educate for business they are not mere adjuncts to the economy; no matter what they contribute to the advancement of knowledge they are not mere adjuncts to scholarship.

The question of a college community in our time calls, then, for an equal stress on both words, calls in fact for a recognition that one cannot have a college unless in some sense it truly is a community. The undergraduate schools of our greatest

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universities highlight this problem and this aspect of the college most acutely, for the pattern common among them — two years of general education divided among dominant areas, and two years of a departmental major plus free electives — is really a confession that departmental needs and patterns dominate a university's thinking about what will profit undergraduates most. The concept of community respect for a Harvard or a Berkeley grows above all from intellectual respect and issues most characteristically in the mutual tolerance of those who may have little in common in what they do but ideally a great deal of common respect for what is done and how.

One can think of some small colleges, on the other hand, where the sense of community is formed in a nearly opposite way through an agreement about rules, attitudes or purposes which may have little to do with the intellectual life but a good deal to do with the so-called "spirit" of the place. Such a community is founded on the exclusiveness of rule, whereas the community of the great universities is founded on the exclusiveness of a certain standard of intellectual achievement — and therefore on a hidden conformity which may be just as restrictive as the dogmatic test of the narrowest church-related college.

Most of the liberal colleges of the country exist between these extremes, and as a result pose a possibility of community for themselves which is both crucially important and not generally understood even by those who exist within it. This possibility is, at its simplest, a fusion of the intellectual variety and vigor of the university college with the clarity of purpose and sense of coherence which the denominational college at its best has to offer. This is the greatest single reason, I suppose, for the feeling which so many of us have about the proper size for a college. There is no magic number, obviously, but there is a size beyond which a faculty ceases to function individually and turns to an arena for pressure groups; there is a size beyond which it is impossible to have any sense of familiarity with undergraduates — the size at which *we* becomes *they* in a community — a shift as dangerous for colleges as for governments but with somewhat less necessity about it.

We cannot passively accept this privilege of intimacy and individuality, however. If we do not shape from it and through it an achievement which counterbalances sheer size and mass in our society, then the pressure on us to grow will be overwhelming. If we *do* somehow maintain and develop individual richness, then it will not matter that we are educating a smaller percentage of students, because their impact will go so far beyond their numbers that we shall be justified without question or criticism. And by such an active achievement we shall also make the most important contribution to the other kinds of educational community which I mentioned a moment ago — that is, the great university and the narrowly denominational college. For, though I speak from the context of the independent college, I do not at all mean that our purposes there are the only significant ones. I do mean that, if we maintain and strengthen our unique effectiveness, we may serve as an encouragement to the state universities, for instance, to experiment with the development of smaller

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groups within their vastness. The violence which took place at Berkeley this past spring can be traced directly to a situation in which other human beings become mere numbers, objects with sex attached. And what takes place socially also takes place intellectually. I doubt very much that a man is well educated who gets from the events of college no insight about human relationships, no sense of the impact of what he does, not merely on how he is to make a living, but on what he becomes as a person. And I doubt equally that the great public universities are going to continue to give an education in this true sense unless they are strongly reinforced by the example, the encouragement, and the competition of the private colleges.

The heart of the kind of education we give, and therefore the stimulus and competition we provide, is a concept of the training of the mind regarded as inseparable from the development of a complete and mature human being. This does not mean as is sometimes suggested in writing about "genteel" education, however, that the training of the mind is secondary to the playing fields of Eton, or social adjustment, or the modern dance or anything else. It is dominant, but at the same time it is not separate or even separable.

I mention so obvious a fact because when we look at the patterns of education which seem to be available at the moment we can see that many of the most destructive struggles going on among us really result from a conviction that intellectual life in college is separate and separable from the rest of life, then or later. And we can in turn see why this is so if we consider the main groups that go to make up a college community and their differing concerns as they impinge on one another. If you'll forgive me for a few categories which even a sociologist would find too simple, we seem to face five major concerns on the part of college faculties: first, the intellectual commitments of individual faculty members; second, the formal *educational* concerns of these same individuals; third, the official concerns of departments which may be intellectual, pedagogical, or (in extremely rare instances, of course) political; fourth, the formal educational interests of the whole college; and fifth, the relationship between the teaching carried on and the external community which that teaching is ultimately designed to serve.

Out of the great diversity of ways in which these major interests are combined comes something of the variety of American education. The educational and intellectual concerns of individuals may be held subordinate to the formal educational concern of the group, as happened for a while at the College of the University of Chicago; or conversely, any overriding educational interest may be sacrificed to the interests of individuals and departments, as happens at so many university colleges. Or we may find ourselves, as most liberal arts colleges do, suppressing to some extent individual intellectual concerns and departmental expectations in favor of two things that don't go together too well logically but do go together very well in practice — individual teaching interests and a formal as well as inclusive educational pattern for the whole college.

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Now I am not interested in trying to say that this third way of combining interests is automatically better than the first two; very often it is not, though as I suggested a few moments ago, the nature of the liberal colleges at their best seems to me central to *everyone's* educational future. What concerns me most at the moment is that these various combinations of force in higher education tend to ignore the final purpose of what is taught. Even in very interesting experimental curricula like those of Antioch and Bennington there is a separation between the active world and the academic preparation for it — a separation which seems to imply that one needs the corrective of reality for the abstraction from reality which is the world of the college classroom. Indeed, those of us in more conventional colleges encourage this very criticism when we talk so constantly about preparation for life. There is no doubt that we are right in what we say; but we are right only because what we really concern ourselves with in college is a way of life in itself. We are not concerned, or at least we should not be concerned, to prepare for something alien to the years of college; we are concerned to show our students a living reality, to give them the rudiments of something which will shape the rest of their lives; and we fondly hope that they will assimilate their later years to what we show them rather than absorbing the years of college, like some bright dream, into the so-called truer reality which comes after it.

In saying so much, we have begun to define our nature as communities and to recognize that the concept we have of ourselves educationally is the most central way in which to describe either what we are or what we ought to be. When a college loses this sense of integrity — and there are some eminent examples around — all the square dances in Wyoming will not make a community of it. Almost as destructive, however, is an idea of the college which may misuse knowledge even if it does not ignore knowledge. If we picture the college's job as that of giving students "things" to be used later on, tools for making something happen, then we have gone far toward creating a situation where learning and the life of the mind may be valued for the money we can make from them but certainly will not be valued as important aspects of a way of life. If we avow the significance of the major disciplines but present them as intellectual Stonehenges, places of pagan worship with no other relevance to our lives, then we shall have gone far toward presenting the life of the mind in a genteel or even hypocritical context. The study of literature has at times erred mightily in this way, pursuing a cult of the unimportant in the interest of a fancied but impossible absolute—the final document, the ultimate piece of gossip, the last lascivious biographic word. A college which takes this faith may be teaching a great deal *about* the great disciplines, but it is not exemplifying them, and it may well destroy the interest of its students in learning, just as the playground idea of a college community perverts the interest of its students in learning.

What then should we hope for, and what *can* we hope for? What can a college do with the life of learning that will create from that college a true and appropriate



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community, that is, a community which is something in itself, not a pallid echo of the family, the church, or the athletic club?

This is the most important question we can ask today, far more important than those questions about the magic curriculum, the perfect plant, or the ideal student body that we so often fret about. And I would be tempted to answer it this way — haltingly and with a recognition that I do not have more than a fragment of the answer. A college if it is to be a community must exemplify certain virtues in its daily life. It should teach *about* them, it should explore and test their uses, but first of all and above all it should exemplify them. And these virtues are not just the official ones of active everyday life but the more pervasive and finally significant virtues of creativeness, diversity, charity, and commitment — in that order and with a relationship implied by that order.

Each of these words is common currency and therefore has a meaning open to misunderstanding and misuse. Creativeness, for example, is usually associated with the more relaxed forms of art, and we suspect the idea because it is open to such distortion, because it is often made the rational substructure for eccentricity and self-indulgence. What we ought to mean by creativeness, of course, is the desire to see something significant exist that did not exist before — a watertank, or a child, or an equation. Without this desire the so-called search for truth is an even worse indulgence than the lust for eurhythmics; it involves the mere replowing of a sterile field and cannot be said to present even the creative whims of an individual. The true sense of creativeness in a college is the awareness that there is no such thing as “the” Shakespeare course, “the” advanced seminar in comparative anatomy. The texture of ideas is created by our grasp of reality, but it is *our* grasp and therefore finite on the one hand while subject to growth and illumination on the other. To seek out and to exemplify this sense of revelation is the first great mandate of a college community.

And the second mandate follows from such a seeking. True diversity is the necessary result of a creative attitude toward reality as I have just described it. We are rather afraid of this kind of diversity in American education, and the proof of our fear is seen in what we try to substitute for it. Our substitutes run to extremes, extremes which in the planning of the course of study we call “free electives” on one side or “integrated courses of study” on the other. In both cases we avoid the real issue in a college curriculum: that of establishing the truth of relationship, of interdependence among major ideas, but equally the truth of disparateness, of disagreement, of realities which can be supported with evidence but which do not mesh with one another.

Here, of course, we are reflecting our entanglement in history. One can picture times in which the diversities would not be as great and, therefore, in which concepts of the college community would emphasize relationship rather than divergence. And one can recognize the opposite pattern, for instance, in the history of the nine-



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teenth century universities where the major disciplines developed a sense of total separation from one another except as they were all subsumed by some allegiance to abstract truth.

Diversity implies, I suppose, both these situations, but in a tension with one another which forbids our being fully comfortable either in the sealed room of an isolated discipline or the imaginary amphitheatre of a core curriculum. It implies a center, for one cannot diverge in chaos; one can merely wander. But it implies that the center is not possessed; it is held as an article of belief; it is (as Mr. E. B. White would say) truth with a small *t* and a claim on our humility rather than our arrogance. Such a concept of diversity implies the constant possibility of agreement and the constant actuality of dissent. It is the outward sign of creativity, the force of mind and spirit as they identify themselves in the world of a college.

Without one specific result or context, however, this concept of diversity will not work for long. It will degenerate into civil war if it does not produce and if it is not in turn sustained by a sense of genuine charity. One might describe this sense of charity as our full awareness of one another; it is our understanding that the arguments of *A* are not all of *A*; but our equal understanding that the arguments of *A* may be valid and even valuable despite the fact that we detest the rest of the man. Charity in this sense, then, does not concern itself with the trivial expectation that we will say nice things about people we dislike; but it does summon us to recognize that the full range of value in a person, a situation, an idea, is greater and other than our self-centered awareness of it.

This recognition is particularly crucial in a college community, I think, because without some such positive sense of what we must expect of ourselves our talents of mind degenerate to mere projections of the ego. One might almost say that the gift of intellectual insight destroys itself sooner or later unless it learns to reside within a matrix of positive and even loving awareness of everything that it itself is not. Charity in this sense is the growing edge of the mind — but the mind defined as the total awareness of a person, not just his power to manipulate some particular set of symbols or constructs. And charity of this sort is the bridge, so far as I can see, the only enduring bridge between intellect and wisdom.

If charity in this sense lends its support to diversity — if charity and diversity become true aspects of one another so that the drive and stimulus of each can feed the life of the college — then we can talk with some security about the commitments of such a college or of the people who make it up. Without this substructure, however, or at least without this awareness of creativity, diversity, and charity, the commitments of a college tend to become merely its excuses for narrow-mindedness and complacency. Within such a context the commitments of a college and of each of its members become the final proof of its vigor — the fact that it can take ideas and insights far enough to stand by them.

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I can remember, five years ago, trying to analyze something of the basic religious implications of the humanities. My concern at that time was with the *implicit* religious view which allowed a work of art or the comprehension of a work of art to exist at all. I find myself now speaking with much less confidence that I know what I am talking about but still sure that what I have tried to describe is, as before, an implicit religious awareness and that a college community cannot truly exist without this sense; nor can it exist if this sense becomes more than an implication, more than an informing richness of attitude which puts effort and ambition and the arrogance of the mind in their place.

This awareness underlying the best kind of college community is "religious," above all, in a rather special sense of the word; it is religious through its acceptance of and its dependence on the simultaneous existence of personalities, ways of insight, kinds of interpretation, that lead not to a single result or a product but to an act of wonder and delight. From this special kind of reverence stems an attitude which we have a right to call that of a truly mature, truly educated person — an attitude of comprehension but of acceptance beyond comprehension, acceptance of a universe which is inscrutable without being incoherent, animated by love without being sentimental. This range of awareness is the great justification of a college community, and equally it is the living center of a college community. It is what our years of preparation and our small salaries and our endless struggles with reluctant minds and our partial mastery of ourselves are all about.

## The Church College and the Revival Of Humane Learning

ROLAND MUSHAT FRYE

All of us are aware of the frequent lack of enthusiasm for the church college which may be found in church, non-church, and educational circles alike. This lack of enthusiasm is expressed even by intellectuals who are fully committed to the principle that Christianity is relevant to higher learning. We are told that the days of greatest opportunity and promise for church colleges are past and that the most we can expect in the future is the continuance of a very few outstanding colleges which will serve as striking exceptions to a general rule of commonplace mediocrity.

Strong arguments support this view, and it is one which we must take seriously, but it is a position which I for one cannot accept. It appears to me, on the contrary, that church colleges have before them the most remarkable and significant possibilities and that if we are both bold and wise we may make contribution which is greater than any which we have yet made even in our most distinguished days as educators to the nation. We may, in a loyalty which is at once Christian and academic, find ways for leading American higher education to a full revival of humane learning. Modern colleges and universities, caught up as they are in a new scholasticism, stand in great need of just that type of renaissance.

Our future contributions cannot be made, as in past generations, by a preponderance of numbers in education. If we are to have any marked usefulness in the future, it must be in a preponderance of genuine quality in our students, in our faculties and in the interactions between them. Unless we can do better work than other institutions, public or private, and unless we can usefully discharge a distinctive function, we can scarcely expect either to draw upon the churches' resources or upon the public's confidence. The only justification for our existence is excellence or the promise of attaining it.

Religious commitment is central to our efforts, but religious commitment alone is not enough. It may, indeed, be the source of very real difficulties. Secular educators generally are not much concerned with our religious orientation so long as it does not impede our academic work, but Christian scholars are concerned both with our academic and religious standards, so that the most telling criticisms of church colleges often come from Christian thinkers. Some of the most brilliant

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Dr. Roland M. Frye, of the Department of English, Emory University, is a member of the Editorial Board of *The Christian Scholar*, and chairman of the Executive Committee of the Faculty Christian Fellowship. His article represents an address made January 8, 1957 at the Association of American Colleges meeting in Philadelphia, before a luncheon for college presidents given by the Commission on Higher Education of the NCCC.

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men in American higher education today have purposely chosen, as Christians, to work in great state universities, being convinced that our church colleges inhibit Christian growth both in their faculties and in their students. They maintain that all too often we inoculate ourselves against Christianity in trying to protect ourselves from secularism. At the same time we expose ourselves to the dangers of moral legalism, the development of the sort of Pharisaic code against which the New Testament repeatedly warns. Such legalism reaches the heights of casuistry in one institution where the students are allowed to play tennis on Sunday but are forbidden to keep score.

An even more dangerous situation arises for us if we act as though we could devise infallibly effective means for delivering grace. Any such assumption is sub-Christian, for the New Testament assures us that grace is the free gift of God to be accepted in freedom by the individual. We know that we cannot deputize the Holy Spirit, that we cannot force genuine Christianity on anyone, not even on freshmen and certainly not on sophomores. What we *can* require of students is an intelligent understanding of the Christian faith and life — and that we certainly should and must require. Our goal is neither monasticism nor legalism but is the vital union, on the highest level, of Christian and academic concern.

In that effort the church colleges have the support of the national faculty Christian movement. Made up of highly competent intellectuals, men of deep conviction and academic integrity, the faculty Christian movement's potential contributions to higher education can scarcely be overemphasized. Its goal is to realize the relevance of Christianity for every aspect of the life of the mind in our time and to do so without sub-Christian piety or sentimentality but in honest humility and unpretentious competence. It is appropriate that Protestant Christianity is thus reasserting its intellectual leadership, for as E. Harris Harbison has recently shown in his brilliant book, *The Christian Scholar in the Age of the Reformation*, Protestantism originated as a movement among scholars, as the affirmation of faith by Christian intellectuals. The renaissance of Christian thought among scholars may in the long run be just as significant in the twentieth century as it was in the sixteenth. Although the faculty Christian movement is not restricted to church campuses — and is often better supported on supposedly secular campuses — it is engaged in the exploration of issues which will be of great interest to every church college.

In all such explorations after truth, the Christian intellectual should of all men be most bold and free. For us Christ alone is Lord, and in loyalty to God as the author of all truth we must be prepared to yield every idol of our own imaginations, past traditions, and current fashions. Protestant theology in our time has demonstrated its allegiance to this supreme Lordship in its examination and revision of theological patterns inherited from the nineteenth century. Out of this reformulation of Christian thought the churches have emerged with a deeper, more

adequately Christian understanding of the faith and with a theological leadership which is, despite certain well-known and fatuous exceptions, spiritually and intellectually commanding. The very experience of self-analysis and creative advance through which the churches have successfully passed furnishes an example of what education must now attempt, for higher education patently needs the discipline of self-scrutiny, of constructive criticism, and of reformulation. But higher education has not yet been willing to subject itself in any very far-reaching and effective way to this necessary discipline. My basic suggestion is that church colleges should lead the way for all American colleges towards that constructive reappraisal and practical reformulation which is of the first order of importance.

Most of us, I suspect, will admit that the state of higher education in America today is at best far from ideal. We continue to do things on the basis of old patterns and immediate pressures and yet often appear unable to define the aims and goals of higher learning in any very convincing, coherent, or relevant way. Thus we are in the quandaries of higher education in general. Although we would like to assure ourselves and others that we can make the world a far better place, we have only to look about us to see what the life of man is, even in an age when we have had unprecedented opportunities for influence and change. Perhaps the claims of education have been too sweeping, and certainly our efforts have been greeted by sweeping criticism. Some of this criticism is easily dismissed, but some comes from men of good will. One of these, Aldous Huxley, has perhaps been too caustic in his analysis of education in the introduction to *Brave New World*, but we should at least attend to what he has said. "The professor and his colleagues," Huxley writes with customary irony,

"are hilarious symptoms of success. The benefactors of humanity deserve due honor and commemoration. Let us build a Pantheon for professors. It should be located among the ruins of one of the gutted cities of Europe or Japan, and over the entrance to the ossuary I would inscribe, in letters six or seven feet high, the simple words: Sacred to the memory of the world's educators: Si Monumentum Requirit Circumspice."<sup>1</sup>

In a stimulating recent essay entitled "Why Are We Mad at Teacher," Professor Henry Steele Commager has analyzed the failures of contemporary higher education. He writes that "if the most educated generation of one of the most educated nations plunges into anti-intellectualism, something must be seriously wrong with either the principle or the practice of education. Since it is almost inconceivable to confess anything wrong with the principle, the responsibility comes back to the practice."<sup>2</sup>

As Aldous Huxley represents the response of certain laymen to the educator's claims, so Commager has summarized the perplexity of the educator himself in the face of his own manifest failure.

Commager is correct in saying that our practice has been faulty, but he is on dangerous ground when he declares that it is almost inconceivable to confess that

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anything is wrong with our principles. Men — even scholars — can never afford to assume that there is nothing wrong with the principles on which they operate, and we who are Protestant intellectuals, devoted to educational programs within the Protestant tradition, must of all men be most ready to subject even our most basic human principles to scrutiny and criticism. We have no doctrine of any human infallibility and know that all our thoughts and actions are affected by sin and error.

We must therefore look both to our purposes and to our practices. In defining the purpose and the character of education, we generally use old words which have lost their meaning. Thus we refer to universities as though the structure of learning were still unified, whereas it is in fact radically segmented. Similarly, we refer to colleges as though colleague-ship were still a distinctive feature of our campuses, whereas we know that beyond our separate departments we generally have only faculty associates, and not colleagues at all, while students can rarely be referred to as collegued with their professors in any very vital way. Even the word campus has lost its meaning. Our campuses are no longer great unbroken and undivided arenas for intellectual exercise and exploration but have become a patchwork of high-walled gardens, many of which are quite beautiful but each of which specializes in particular products which are hawked with blatant disregard, or at best unconcern, for the products of the other high-walled gardens. Thus we no longer have universities, or colleges, or campuses in the original senses of those words. What the fraternities have done to divide the student body is but a parody of what higher education has done to divide itself.

The divisions within the college have many valid and laudable functions. It is patently true that science could not have progressed as it has without specialized research and teaching, and in the face of scientific advances there can be no constructive turning back of the clock. In the humane studies the situation is quite different, but even here specialized research has cleared away much misinformation, has clarified our understanding of many important subjects, and has at least made an honest attempt to keep the teacher's mind alive and alert.

When all of this has been said, however, it is still clear that academic departmentalization has raised very basic problems for liberal arts education. Particularly in the humanities, specialization ossifies into airtight compartments, is regarded as axiomatically self-justifying, and preserves itself with an intense rigidity. As a result, education becomes more and more a process of gathering specialized information, of amassing knowledge in terms of departmental orientation.

Departments proliferate, amoeba-like, in a seemingly endless propagation of particular disciplines. Technologists and humanists, scientists and social scientists, vie with each other in a rivalry which can, and at times does, degenerate into bitter antagonism and deep-seated mutual suspicion. In the competing autonomies of new and old alike we see evidenced the absence of leading conceptions which are able to give direction, meaning, and unity to our many and varied inquiries.



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Out of this lack of central orientation comes the plethora of educational debasement which we see about us — credit courses in cooking, basket weaving, and fly casting, while in some universities whole schools are devoted to hotel management and to training airline stewardesses. But how can we complain? Despite our efforts to shift the blame to John Dewey — who is surely culpable enough — must we not admit that even the best principles of higher education are also responsible? If education is primarily a process of gathering specialized information, if we are primarily intent on the transmission and manipulation of knowledge, then why should five hours spent in the study of parlor games be given any less credit than five hours spent in the study of Plato? Higher education has accepted the protean task of working out the implications of an almost unprecedented relativism.

To a large extent such relativism is forced upon education from without, from an unthinking public. Yet this is not its only source. Even among the most staunchly erudite educators, men of high personal character and strict academic rigor, there is often found a pervasive intellectual relativism which holds that choice among values and ideas is not the function of education. But the game is up for higher education as a solid intellectual endeavor once it has chosen not to commit itself to values. Then, quite clearly and depending entirely upon individual preference, parlor games may be as valuable a subject as Plato, and we cannot deny a place in the curriculum to hotel management or to basket weaving. Once relativism is accepted in the colleges, even John Stuart Mill cannot save us from the conclusion that it is better to live like a satisfied pig than like a dissatisfied Socrates.

Furthermore, relativism cannot preserve intellectual freedom. It is rather like the remora which attaches itself to a larger fish for food and transportation while contributing little to its host in return. Disengaged and uncommitted academic endeavor achieved the most impressive results in the German universities, and they yielded themselves tragically to Nazi dominance. Only a few men such as Karl Barth stood up — but then Barth may scarcely be classified as a relativist. Relativism in education can exist only in terms of academic freedom, but academic freedom must base itself upon a surer foundation than the relativists can offer.

Despite influences of relativism, what is clearly best in our work today is training in the collection, evaluation and manipulation of knowledge. Such training has weight and substance to it, brings the mind into contact with reality, and by basing itself upon precise and exact observation has produced great new bodies of knowledge in all fields.

It is distressingly easy to parody this primary emphasis upon the acquisition of knowledge. Sometimes it even parodies itself when it operates as though the human mind exists to be wadded with facts as the old muzzle-loading cannon were rammed with powder and shot to be discharged at a given signal, leaving the barrel as empty as it was before, although somewhat more grimy. But parodied or not, the conventional research emphasis has produced fruits of great worth.

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Even at its best, however, a central concentration upon knowledge as the end of learning is not adequate for the highest goals of liberal arts education which should seek the fullest comprehension of life. The premium which is placed on faculty publication may very well advance the cause of truth in the natural sciences, but it may be seriously questioned that it does so in the humane studies where truth is of a somewhat different order. Although many publications in the humanities are valuable and illuminating, the organized pressure for research as we generally conceive of it today focuses attention upon minutiae and produces an ever deeper delving after the small points of specialized concern. In all but a very few exceptional men this process *tends to stunt the growth of large-mindedness* and to inhibit a broadly humane vision. Alfred North Whitehead aptly criticized such specialization when he wrote that "the increasing departmentalization of universities during the last hundred years, however necessary for administrative, tends to trivialize the mentality of the teaching profession."<sup>3</sup>

If Whitehead's analysis is correct, as I believe it is, then we are generally engaged in higher education in attempting to liberalize the minds of students through a system which tends to trivialize the minds of the faculty. Obviously, nothing could be more abortive. And yet our larger institutions are caught up in this system and their faculties cannot escape from its pressures. Even in our smaller colleges where there is no emphasis on continuous publication, faculties have been trained in the prevailing system, indoctrinated in its values, and have as yet been offered no very impressive or viable alternative to it.

The church colleges must provide that alternative. Given the intimate and less divisive conditions of the small college, it is possible to experiment and explore with creative freedom. If the church colleges can develop the patterns for a vigorous renaissance of the life of the mind, the examples they set will surely be contagious. Woodrow Wilson maintained that a true university could not exist apart from Christianity, and I suspect that the desiccation of higher learning in our age results in good part from our general loss of the insight and proportion of the Christian faith. Working out from that faith in terms of intellectual excellence, we may revitalize American higher education.

We cannot assume that our customary emphasis on "good teaching" alone will accomplish this result when, as is often the case, we overburden teachers to the point where they become pedants as surely and as swiftly as do the myopically productive scholars. We must seek means not only to train but to sustain faculties which are made up of men of thought, men of humane wisdom, not mere counters, measurers and diligent graders, but men concerned with significance, men who are assessors of life. There must be constructive leisure with a premium on contemplation, on good talk and on good art, all of which are so often ignored in our culture. On the church college campus these intellectual processes may be encouraged and nourished as nowhere else in the contemporary world. Throughout, they should be

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sustained by mature faith and meaningful worship, as they become central elements in the life of a community.

The primary concern of this community should be for what Albert Schweitzer calls elemental thought as distinguished from unelemental thought. In the main, as we have observed, modern education is characterized by unelemental thinking, the preoccupation with factual observation in preference to humane understanding, with knowledges and skills rather than with wisdom. So are developed academic systems and half-systems which have little or no relation to each other and only partial relevance for man's existential problems. "On all these things," Schweitzer writes, unelemental thought discourses to man "as if he were not a being who is in the world and lives his life in it, but one who is stationed near it, and contemplates it from the outside."<sup>4</sup>

Although such thinking has its value, it is a value secondary to that of elemental thought, which Schweitzer defines in this way: "Elemental thinking is that which starts from the fundamental questions about the relations of man to the universe, about the meaning of life, and about the nature of goodness. It stands in the most immediate connection with the thinking which impulse stirs in everyone. It enters into that thinking, widening and deepening it."<sup>5</sup> In terms of this type of thought, then, we have settled nothing until we have arrived at a working understanding of what constitutes the chief end of man, and we are really only scratching the surface of learning when we teach primarily either how to do things or how things have been done, rather than going into the very heart of the problem, to the deepest possible consideration of what is worth doing and of what is to be done.

The basic questions must be raised, for it is to the consideration and mastery of these that liberal arts education is, or should be, directed. These questions must be considered with the full passion of inwardness, with the utmost existential relevance. What is man? How is he related to the rest of nature and to other men? Is he related to something above and prior to both? If so, what is this divine being and what is the impinging relevance of divinity for man? If we can succeed in doing no more than making these basic and perennial questions live issues for both students and faculty, then the whole educational life of the nation will be elevated. Liberal education will once again be the preparation for life on a high and humane plane of existence, approached through a systematic and exciting of the full landscape of reality. Anything less is technology.

When so understood, higher learning assumes its proper proportions. Information will have its place, a large and honored place, but we will regard learning primarily as the quest for significance and will use the quest for information only as a means to that end. We may not be able to raise up a generation of wise men, an era of philosopher kings, but we can approach that ideal by making wisdom a liver option among us than it has been in recent years.

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But what do we mean by wisdom? As a provisional definition I suggest that we may think of it as a trained and judicious capacity for the best ordering of life, and to Christians, of course, life will mean an existence broadening out of the transitory into the everlasting. This wisdom is not a rarified plant suited only to the remoter heights of Parnassus and to the few who live there. John Milton wrote of it that

... to know  
That which before us lies in daily life  
Is the prime wisdom.\*

His was the reasoned judgment of the true scholar who knows the domain which he possesses.

Wisdom, then, is the goal of education, and to it knowledge is related as a faithful servant. Thus we have the uses of the past, the tutelage of man's long historic experience and experiment, and so we seek to open up to our students a wide and catholic appreciation of the best that men have said and done. At the same time we know that the past has never pre-empted truth, never exhausted it, and we must in loyalty to the truth be forever ready to restudy and redefine it. In this sense, Barth is the truest ally of Calvin, and Calvin the truest ally of Aquinas, just as Einstein, Newton and Aristotle are at one in their reverence for a basic truth. So understood, old knowledge and new understanding are at one in wisdom, and this wisdom, without scorn for the old or fear of the new, may become the characteristic mark of the church college. The basic principle is beautifully stated in a prayer for the liberal arts in the *Book of Common Order* of the Church of Scotland:

Direct and bless, we beseech Thee, Lord, those who in this generation speak where many listen, and write what many read; that they may do their part in making the heart of the people wise, its mind sound, and its will righteous; to the honor of Jesus Christ our Lord.<sup>7</sup>

In this spirit the church colleges can achieve a renaissance of the life of the mind, a powerful revival of humane wisdom in our time.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*, New York, Bantam Books, 1955, viii.

<sup>2</sup>Henry Steele Commager, "Why Are We Mad at Teacher," *The Reporter* (Oct. 21, 1954), p. 41.

<sup>3</sup>Quoted by Henry P. Van Dusen in *God in Education*, New York, Scribners, 1951, p. 47, and referred there to A. N. Whitehead, *Nature and Life*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1934, p. 16. I have looked for the passage in this work, according to the citation, but cannot find it.

<sup>4</sup>Albert Schweitzer, *Out of My Life and Thought*, New York, Mentor Books, 1953, p. 176.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 174.

<sup>6</sup>*Paradise Lost*, VIII, 192-94.

<sup>7</sup>*Book of Common Order of the Church of Scotland*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, n.d., p. 299.

## Puritan Attitudes Toward Learning

DAVID J. MAITLAND

Titles frequently suggest to the reader something different from what the writer had in mind. Given this tendency, especially the expectation of something more comprehensive than was intended, I believe it necessary at the outset to indicate the limits of this article.<sup>1</sup>

The Puritan to whom I refer lived and wrote between 1640-1660. He was both a product of generations which preceded him and an influence upon those which followed. In some measure, however, he transcended the direct causal influence of his predecessors, and his thought was transformed by his successors.<sup>2</sup>

The use of the plural, "attitudes," is intentional. Here again, confusions can and must be avoided by a refusal to paint all Puritans with the same brush. By the middle of the seventeenth century, Puritanism was no longer a homogeneous movement although it had not yet developed the denominational structure of the following decades. There were "parties" within Puritanism which it will be part of our purpose to distinguish. They had in common enough of the Puritan heritage to enable one to lump them together in contrast with those who did not share their Puritan views. Seen by themselves, however, especially in terms of their attitudes toward learning, clear distinctions can be made.

Even the word learning needs clarification. As much as Puritanism underwent vast changes during the half-century between the Hampton Court Conference (1604) and the Cromwellian Protectorate, a good case could be made for the claim that the concept of learning was even more transformed in the period between the publication of Bacon's *Advancement of Learning* in 1605 and the founding of the Royal Society. It will not be possible to discuss, or even to mention, all of the factors which entered each of these significant developments. At best, we intend to demonstrate that there were several Puritan attitudes toward learning. We shall attempt, also, to account for these attitudes and to suggest consequences that they may have had for developments in the decades following 1660.

It has been held that Puritanism was hostile to learning.<sup>3</sup> Little reliable evidence can be adduced to uphold this assertion.<sup>4</sup> What is clear is that in mid-seventeenth century England the familiar university curriculum, in which clergy and all other graduates were trained, was under considerable attack from sources unrelated to Puritanism. As part of their attack upon erroneous theological views and the positions of economic privilege held by the more conservative Puritans, both of which were buttressed by university learning, the Antinomians, upon whom Professor Solt bases his case for Puritan anti-intellectualism, did join in the attack

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upon the universities. This attack, however, did not have as its objective the destruction of the universities. As we shall see, there was sound theological reason why certain elements in Puritanism could take up the cry for university reform which had first been uttered — without benefit of Puritan persuasion — by Francis Bacon. The Puritan attack upon the universities was one phase of a theological dispute within Puritanism. Central to this dispute was the question of the appropriateness of a learned ministry. *Therefore*, but incidental to the central issue, the sectarian Puritan questions about the adequacy of university education were raised.

It has been suggested above both that mid-seventeenth century Puritanism had enough in common to distinguish it from non-Puritan English Christianity and that there were distinguishable elements, or "parties," within Puritanism. The unifying conviction within Puritanism was the insistence that deep personal religious experience should be normative for every Christian. There were other important characteristics, but the central emphasis was upon the experience of God-given grace which alone assured salvation.<sup>5</sup>

Ironically, however, the very emphasis which gave unity and drive to the movement in its early decades became the rock on which later splits within Puritanism occurred. While they agreed that the purpose of life — fellowship with God and man — had been broken by sin and that God had provided the means for re-establishing these relationships, they came to differ radically "on the method of arriving at that experience, its content, and its consequences."<sup>6</sup> They separated into distinct "parties" on the basis of their disagreements about how the crucial experience of grace was apprehended and how this experience was related to acquired human knowledge.

There were, of course, other than strictly theological factors involved in the disputes between the Puritan factions. On the basis of their conviction that, irrespective of academic preparation, the gift of the Holy Spirit alone qualified a person to witness to the Gospel, the sectarians opposed the restraints imposed upon public preaching by non-ordained persons.<sup>7</sup> There was also vigorous opposition to the compulsory tithe for the public maintenance of the established clergy.<sup>8</sup> It has also been suggested that the struggle between the Puritan elements was actually an aspect of the political revolution against Anglican-Presbyterian feudalism.<sup>9</sup> To be sure, these and other issues were aspects of the struggle within Puritanism, but they added fuel rather than igniting the fire.

At one extreme there were those, the sectarian Puritans, who insisted upon the complete discontinuity between the realms of grace and of nature, of faith and of learning. This "party" in its most radical spokesmen rejected all externals — church, sacraments and ministry — and were consistent opponents of the learned clergy. At the other extreme were those Puritans who admitted that while the Fall had dimmed it had not utterly obliterated man's rational capacities. Insisting that



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they were in no way contributing to any gospel of works nor detracting from the unmerited character of God's grace, they held that what men could know rationally was not contradicted but completed by revelation. According to such an understanding, learning was not only possible but very desirable for the clergy.

In between the two extremes stood a more moderate Puritan group. This "party," though less distinct than either the sectarians or the conservatives, managed to avoid the set battles of the pamphlet war between the extremists. They may be distinguished from the others by the absence of rigidity regarding the theological questions of the day, by their significant interest in the education appropriate to non-clergy as well as to clergy, and by their ability to agree from time to time with views of each of the extremists.

What precision the moderates may have lost by their lack of a narrow theological base they made up for in their vision of a much more comprehensive education than either of the extremists was able to conceive. They were able to select views from each of the extremists without agreeing wholeheartedly with either of them. They were, for example, more sympathetic to the "principle of segregation" than were the conservatives.<sup>10</sup> Acceptance of this "principle" made the moderates more receptive in the new empirical science. However, unlike the sectarians, they refused to make the "principle" absolute. This enabled them to avoid uncritical endorsement of experimentalism as the only appropriate university methodology, a view which is found in the writing of an important sectarian.<sup>11</sup> Nor were the moderates interested to destroy theological learning. Because of their acceptance of the conservative Puritan doctrine of "meanes" whereby God selected objective channels for the normal conveyance of his grace, the moderates approved the institutions of church and ministry as well as the relationship of the state to both. While their preference for the experimental over the scholastic science was in part based upon their conviction that the former would prove even more valuable to Christian apologetics, they were also influenced in this preference by their recognition of the usefulness of such science to non-clerical elements in society.

Literature from the period 1640-1660 indicates quite clearly that Puritanism as a whole was not inimical to learning. There was, however, disagreement about the kind of learning which was to be favored and the uses to which learning was to be put. It has been suggested that these disagreements were an expression of deeper theological and ecclesiastical disagreements, and that attitudes toward learning were influenced by a growing enthusiasm for an experimental study of nature which arose independently of Puritanism.

The sectarians urged an absolute distinction between religious and all other knowledge. The ends which these forms of knowledge were to serve were wholly dissimilar; religious knowledge affected salvation; other knowledge involved the mastery of nature. Since their primary emphasis was upon salvation by unmerited

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grace, the sectarians concentrated their efforts upon attacking a theological learning (to which the inherited university curriculum was particularly adapted) which they felt thwarted their basic religious objective. Such interest as they showed in the experimental study of nature, while not inconsistent with their theology, was apparently incidental to their primary religious interest. The means by which the two forms of knowledge were gained were also antithetical.<sup>12</sup> Saving knowledge of God came by unmerited grace alone; controlling knowledge of nature came by the (empirical) study of nature by man.

Classical Puritanism, i.e., the conservatives and moderates seen in opposition to the sectarians, insisted upon the wholeness of knowledge. The radical distinction between revealed and acquired knowledge, to which sectarians held most consistently, was not affirmed in the same way by other Puritans. In fact, it was the attempt to insist upon the continuity of acquired with revealed knowledge which provoked the sectarian charge that classical Puritanism had compromised the basic Puritan insistence upon salvation as a wholly unmerited gift. The educational views of the conservatives at this time, attacked as this party was from sectarian quarters, were largely determined by their need to defend the learned ministry. The wholeness of knowledge which they espoused was, therefore, dictated by clerical needs and overarched by theology. They were, partly by the vigor and persistence of their attackers, forced into an inflexible defense of the inherited university curriculum.

The moderates, less involved in the ecclesiastical power-struggle, were able to make more of the "principle of segregation" without opposing the institution of the ministry as such nor the appropriateness of a learned ministry in particular. They were thus able to question the adequacy of a university curriculum exclusively determined by the needs of the clergy without seeming to threaten the historic institutions of Christendom. At the same time they were able to foster the new science as an instrument for the service of church and an expanding society. By their vision of a comprehensive university curriculum the moderate Puritans were able to by-pass the stalemate in which the extremists were locked.

To speak, therefore, as the title of this article does, of the attitudes of Puritanism toward learning it has been necessary to distinguish among three "parties" within the Puritan whole. None of these "parties" was anti-intellectual although they all viewed the universities somewhat differently and had varied ambitions for them.

The sectarians who have frequently been accused of anti-intellectual activities may not justly be so charged. Disagreeing theologically with the more conservative Puritans who happened to be in power during the early years of the Civil War, the sectarians attacked the universities as part of their attack upon the learned ministry and its "errors." The sectarians were, therefore, on practical grounds, hostile to

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the universities as seed-beds of the learned clergy. On theological grounds they were also opposed to rationalistic emphases which they felt to be characteristic of the universities. This "Aristotelianism" represented too much enthusiasm for the human intellect and threatened their conviction that salvation was by free grace alone. What the sectarian opposed most vehemently was intellectual pretension. He recognized the inevitability of scholarship, even of theological scholarship. He simply denied its necessary relevance to the experience of grace and to the work of the Christian ministry. In the words of William Dell:

If the Universities will stand upon an Humane and Civil account, as Schools of good Learning for the instructing and educating Youth in the knowledge of the Tongues and of Liberal Arts and Sciences, thereby to make them usefull and serviceable to the Commonwealth . . . then let them stand, during the good Pleasure of God; but if they will exalt themselves . . . and place themselves on Christ's very Throne . . . then let them in the Name of Christ descend into that darkness out of which they first sprang. . . .<sup>13</sup>

Some enthusiasm for a more Baconian approach to the study of nature at the universities is to be found in one of the last of the sectarian writings concerned with education. As suggested above, such an enthusiasm was not at all inconsistent with their "principle of segregation" of the realms of nature and grace. Bacon and the Puritan sectarians were quite in agreement that there should have been no relationship between science and theology. That their objectives in the separation — his to protect science, theirs to protect religion — were totally opposite simply demonstrates that politics has no monopoly on strange bedfellows. Careful examination of the sectarian literature, however, suggests that while there was an anti-rationalism common both to the experimental scientists and to the Puritan experientialism, the sectarian enthusiasm for more Bacon at the universities was at least partly opportunistic. The new science was exposing the limitations of the old Aristotelianism which dominated the universities, and the sectarians seized the convenient opportunity to embarrass their ecclesiastical enemies by attacking the universities upon which clerical well-being seemed largely to depend.

The conservative Puritans, forced into a rear-guard action by the aggressiveness of the sectarians, made little significant contribution to the thought about educational reform in England in the middle decades of the seventeenth century. It is not clear that they were hostile to the New Science associated with the name of Bacon. Only one man, Alexander Ross, of the many who wrote about educational matters, identified himself as unalterably committed to Aristotle.<sup>14</sup> But such interest as was shown in the experimental science was based upon the usefulness it might have had to the Christian apologist. The conservatives believed in a learned ministry, and their defense of learning was a defense of the ministry. Whether in different historical circumstances conservative Puritanism could have given more positive lead to new curricular developments is impossible to determine. Their confidence in the competence of reason would seem to have discouraged too

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much enthusiasm for a strictly experimental science. The developments of later English Presbyterianism indicate the victory of Reason over Spirit. The difficult course between antinomianism and socinianism along which seventeenth century Puritan conservatives moved was abandoned in the successes of eighteenth century Unitarian rationalism.

Within Puritanism in the English seventeenth century the moderates held the key to the educational future. Such belated interest in experimental science as had been expressed by the last of the important sectarian writers, John Webster, had been anticipated by moderate Puritan interest in science for several decades.<sup>15</sup> Sensitive to extra-ecclesiastical educational needs and avoiding the constricting influence of involvement in the controversies over the learned ministry, these Puritans were able to formulate a concept of the university to which later centuries would be indebted. Unlike the sectarians the moderates wrote as men who had both thorough acquaintance with and deep affection for the universities. Learning was for them no pawn in an ecclesiastical squabble. Unlike the conservatives they were not under constant theological attack and had freedom for something more than the defense of the *status quo*. While they would not have accepted the high role assigned to reason by some of the conservatives,<sup>16</sup> they recognized that the alternative to the employment of reason was not unity of life in the Spirit, as the sectarians held, but both ecclesiastical and civil chaos.

There is little doubt but that the principal moderates were under Baconian influence. It was from their successful efforts at both Oxford and Cambridge that the nucleus was developed out of which The Royal Society was founded.<sup>17</sup>

They were not, however, merely spokesmen for the new science. Equally important was their recognition that no one methodology could be made normative for all of the work of a university. They retained the earlier vision of a comprehensive university. There were various new needs within society for which the narrow inherited curriculum was inadequate. Innovations for which they worked, however, were not intended to replace all of the inherited training of the university. As men's needs and ambitions varied, so the university had varied resources with which to provide for them. Seth Ward stated the case against those who urged 'upon the universities exclusive interest in the experimental method.

There is one thing which this sort of Pamphleteers [John Webster's *Academiarum Examen*] insist on, which as it is pursued by my L. Verulam [Bacon], so it carries weight with it. . . . It is, that instead of verball Exercises, we should set upon experiments and observations, that we should lay aside our Disputations, Declamations, and Publick Lectures, and betake ourselves, to Agriculture, Mechanicks, Chymistry, and the Like.

It cannot be denied but this is the way, and the only way to perfect Naturall Philosophy and Medicine: so that whosoever intend to professe the one or the other, are to take that course, and I have not neglected occasionally to tell the world, that this way is pursued among us. But our Academies are of a more generall and comprehensive

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institution, and as there is a provision here made, that whosoever will be excellent in any kind, in any Art, Science, or Language, may here receive assistance, and be led by the hand, till he come to be excellent; so is there a provision likewise, that men be not forced into particular waies, but may receive an institution, variously answerable to their genius and design.<sup>18</sup>

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The fact that the word Puritan is part of this title makes it doubly necessary to indicate the scope. Even a casual familiarity with the literature on Puritanism confronts one with the diverse interpretations which have been offered. A striking example of the different interpretations which are possible is to be found in a comparison of the writings of J. T. Adams, e.g. *The Founding of New England*, 1921, and Samuel Eliot Morison, e.g., *Builders of the Bay Colony*, 1930. The irony of this particular disagreement is heightened when one realizes that Morison was Adams' successor at Harvard.

<sup>2</sup> Concluding his studies with the death of Elizabeth, M. M. Knappen, *Tudor Puritanism*, 1939, Chapter XXVI, "Learning and Education," finds sixteenth century Puritanism to have been wholly backward-looking and dogmatically motivated in its approach to education. Writing about the period following the Restoration, J. W. Ashley Smith, *The Birth of Modern Education: The Contribution of the Dissenting academies 1660-1800*, 1954, *passim*., demonstrates that the academies which the late seventeenth century Puritans, as a result of their exclusion from the universities, were obliged to found for the education of their children made highly significant contributions to modern education, especially in curricular modification.

<sup>3</sup> Given his Anglican and nineteenth century biases, plus the fact that he did not make extensive use of source material, one can be somewhat patient with such a judgment when it is found in H. H. Henson, *Puritanism in England*, 1912, Chapter III, "The Intellectual Failure of Puritanism." It is more unfortunate, however, to find this same opinion being implied today. Cf. Leo F. Solt, "Anti-Intellectualism in the Puritan Revolution," *Church History*, XXIV, 4 (December, 1956), pp. 306-316. Professor Solt, of Indiana University, has selected an element within mid-seventeenth century Puritanism which was certainly hostile to a learned ministry. and has unfairly — at least in his title — applied the anti-intellectual label to them. This particular group was opposed to learning as a prerequisite for the ministry and to the Aristotelianism which dominated the universities, but they were definitely not hostile to learning.

<sup>4</sup> The occasional charge against the Sectarian Puritans, those who stressed the sole adequacy of the indwelling Holy Spirit for salvation, of total hostility to learning, came from Puritans who emphasized the importance of an educated ministry. That such charges were exaggerated, given the threat to the learned ministry which the Sectarians represented, seems quite plausible. That there were a handful of fanatical extremists who may have believed the Spirit adequate to every facet of life, hardly justifies the charge that Puritanism was an anti-intellectual movement.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. A. S. P. Woodhouse, ed., *Puritanism and Liberty*, 2nd ed., 1950, pp. 38-58, for discussion of the importance of dogma, the Bible, zeal for positive reform, the combination of utopianism and iconoclasm, and a concern for liberty as other important features of the Puritan movement. Discussion of the important covenant theology is to be found in many places. One of the best is Perry Miller, "The Marrow of Puritan Divinity," *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, XXXII, (February, 1935).

<sup>6</sup> J. C. Brauer, "Reflections on the Nature of English Puritanism," *Church History*, XXIII, 2 (June, 1954), p. 106. This an extremely suggestive article.

<sup>7</sup> Cf., e.g., Samuel How, *The Sufficiency of the spirits teaching without humane learning*, 1640; and John Spencer, *A Short Treatise Concerning the lawfulness of every mans exercising his gift*, 1641.



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\* Cf., e.g., William Erbury, *Ministers for Tythes . . . No Ministers of the Gospel*, 1653. Himself an educated man, Erbury was vitriolic in his criticism of the universities because he saw "Priests and University-Doctors joyn together for Tythes." Thomas Collyer, *A brief Discovery of the Corruption of the Ministrie . . .*, (1647), expressed similar views with slightly more finesse. He saw an avaricious clergy which "knowes to a peny what he hath coming in for every Sermon he makes."

<sup>2</sup> J. Howard Schultz, *Milton and Forbidden Knowledge*, New York, 1955, pp. 196ff. This is a most helpful, if somewhat cynical, guide through the maze of ingredients which made up the controversy over the learned ministry. It is especially useful as antidote to the characterization of the sectarian Puritans as harbingers of modernity because they urged more experimental science, which one finds in R. F. Jones, *Ancients and Moderns: A Study of the Background of the Battle of the Books*, St. Louis, 1936.

<sup>3</sup> The term, "principle of segregation," is used by Woodhouse, *Puritanism and Liberty*, p. 58, to describe the separation and opposition of the orders of nature and grace within sectarian Puritan thought.

<sup>4</sup> John Webster, *Academiarum Examen*, 1654.

<sup>5</sup> In a more extended treatment this statement would need careful clarification. Certain common factors may well have been present in their apparently contradictory enthusiasm for the knowledge of God exclusively by Grace and their recommendations of the study of nature by observation. Both enthusiasms were fundamentally anti-rational and they stressed the importance of experience.

<sup>6</sup> William Dell, *The Stumbling Stone*, 1653, pp. 27-28.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Alexander Ross, *Arcana Microcosmi*, 1652, especially his "Epistle Dedicatory"; *The Leviathan Drawn Out with a Hook*, 1653; and *Medicus Medicatus*, 1645.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Dorothy Stimson, *Scientists and Amateurs: A History of the Royal Society*, New York, 1948; and, despite an inadequate typology for Puritanism, Jones, *Ancients and Moderns*, especially the early chapters.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Joseph Sedgwick, *Learnings Necessity and A Sermon Preached at St. Marie's*, both 1653. Cp. moderate John Hall's *Horae Vacivae*, 1646.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Francis R. Johnson, "Gresham College: Precursor of the Royal Society," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, I, 4 (October, 1940), and Stimson, *Scientists and Amateurs*.

<sup>11</sup> [Seth Ward], *Vindiciae Academicarum*, 1654, pp. 49-50.



## Martin Buber's Concept of Education: A New Approach to College Teaching

MAURICE FRIEDMAN

There are two basic ways by which one may influence the formation of the minds and lives of others, writes the contemporary Jewish philosopher, Martin Buber. One of these is most highly developed in propaganda, the other in education. In the first, one imposes one's opinion and attitude on the other in such a way that his psychic action is really one's own. In the second, one discovers and nourishes in the soul of the other what one has recognized in oneself as the right. Because it is the right, it must also be living in the other as a possibility among possibilities, a potentiality that only needs to be unlocked — not through instruction but through meeting, the existential communication between one who has found direction and one who is finding it. The educator recognizes each of his pupils as the bearer of a unique task of being that can be fulfilled through him alone. He has learned to understand himself as the helper of each in the inner battle between the actualizing forces and those which oppose them. But he cannot desire to impose on the other the product of his own struggle for actualization, for he believes that the right must be realized in each man in a unique personal way.<sup>1</sup> The real choice, then, does not lie between a teacher's having values and not having them but between his imposing those values on the student and his allowing them to come to flower in the student in a way that is appropriate to the student's personality.

What is most essential in the teacher's meeting with the student, according to Buber, is that he see through the eyes of the student — experience the relationship from the other side. Only if the teacher makes the student present to his imagination in a quite real and concrete way, can he avoid the danger that his will to educate will degenerate into arbitrariness and the desire to dominate and enjoy his students. This experiencing of the other side is the essence of what Buber calls "dialogue": the teacher sees the position of the student in his concrete actuality yet does not lose sight of his own. But the pupil cannot see the teacher's point of view equally well without the teaching relationship being destroyed. Through discovering the "otherness" of the pupil the teacher discovers his own real limits, but also through this discovery he recognizes the forces of the world which the pupil needs to grow and he draws these forces into himself. Thus through his concern with the pupil the teacher educates himself. The teacher makes himself the living selection of the world which comes in his person to meet, draw out, and form the pupil. Education to Buber means just this selection by the teacher of the effective world.<sup>2</sup>

Buber would agree with Jacques Maritain and Robert M. Hutchins that the conception of "what man is" is basic to philosophy of education. But in their con-

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ception of man and of the education proper to man, Hutchins and Maritain have carried forward the Platonic dualism of soul and body in a way that Buber could not accept. To both, man is essentially defined as a rational animal, and to both the essential function of education is the development of man's rational faculty. Liberal education, writes Hutchins, conforms to "the conception of man as . . . an animal who seeks and attains his highest felicity through the exercise and perfection of his reason."<sup>3</sup> Buber, in contrast, has continually protested against a one-sided intellectualism cut off from the totality of life and from personal responsibility. "This intellectualization isolates man," writes Buber, "for the bridge of direct community only spans from man to man and so from spirit to spirit, but not from thinking apparatus to thinking apparatus."<sup>4</sup> The definition of man as a rational animal, moreover, is radically erroneous in its core, even as it is radically harmful in its consequences. "Man is not a centaur," writes Buber. "He is man through and through. . . . Even man's hunger is not an animal's hunger. Human reason is to be understood only in connexion with human non-reason."<sup>5</sup>

Buber's criticism of the classical mind-body dualism is shared by the educational school of John Dewey. But for Dewey the denial of this dualism rests upon an experimental naturalism that emphasizes man's organic continuity with nature and the environment and the development of man's reasoning powers as a natural product of organic evolution. Dewey's conception of mind as the conscious adaptation of the organism to the social and natural environment falls almost exclusively into Buber's "I-It" relationship of knowing and using. "Meaning," writes John L. Childs, paraphrasing Dewey's educational philosophy, "signifies that knowledge of operations, or of the behavior of events, which makes significant prediction and control possible."<sup>6</sup> Dewey has insisted on the education of "the whole man" — the integration of thought and emotion, of learning and experience, but his conception of the individual's potentialities and wholeness falls short of a real understanding of personality. The Deweyite approach to education has often tended to confuse personality with individuality and to look on the "person" as merely a collection of potentialities and the education of the person as the development of these potentialities. "The genuine educator does not merely consider individual functions of his pupil," writes Buber. "His concern is always the person as a whole, both in the actuality in which he lives before you now and in his possibility, what he can become." Personality, for Buber, is the wholeness of man, what he becomes in the "I-Thou" relation with other real selves; individuality is the necessary substratum of personality, the partial factors — mental and material — that are needed before his wholeness can come into being but which do not add up to this wholeness. Personality is the "I" of the "I-Thou" relation, individuality the "I" of the "I-It". It is only in the "I-Thou" relation that one becomes whole, becomes a person, and it is only in this reciprocal relation that the teacher can really make the student's wholeness present to himself and can aid in the growth of this wholeness. "For the inmost growth of the self is not accomplished, as people like to suppose today, in

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man's relation to himself, but . . . in the making present of another self and in the knowledge that one is made present in his own self by the other."<sup>7</sup>

A corollary of this issue of the education of the "rational man" or of "the whole man" is the famous controversy between the "Great Books" approach which stresses a uniform classical education to correspond to a universal and timeless human nature and the developmentalist approach which stresses an education for immediate needs. "I do not deny the fact of individual differences," writes Hutchins. "I deny that it is the most important fact about men or the one on which an educational system should be erected. . . . The great productions of the human mind are the common heritage of all mankind. They supply the framework through which we understand one another."<sup>8</sup> According to John Dewey, this call for the pure classics isolates the literary products of man's history from their connection with the present environment. He advances, in contrast, the idea of education as a "continuous reconstruction of experience." "Principles and universals grow out of the subject matters of the everyday world and are of the nature of means for ordering empirical affairs," writes Professor Childs in further paraphrase of Dewey. "They are not *a priori*, and they cannot be learned effectually apart from their use in social and natural contexts."<sup>9</sup>

Buber, like Dewey, opposes a uniform education and proposes instead an education that will produce the particular type of man who is able to respond to the demands of his particular historical situation. This does not mean that the students should not study the classics, but they should do so in order that they may become whole persons able to influence others and not for the knowledge itself. "Education worthy of the name is essentially education of character," writes Buber. "And character is not above situation but is attached to the cruel, hard demand of this hour."<sup>10</sup> The realm from which the educative material should be drawn, however, is no special one.

Basically it includes everything. But what is taken from it at any particular time is not determined by any universal principles; what is decisive here is our present situation. It alone furnishes the criterion for selection: what the man who shall there withstand this situation — what our growing generation needs in order to withstand it — that and nothing else is the educative material of our hour. Here the universal and the particular properly unite and mix.<sup>11</sup>

A classic can only attain the quality of immediacy for us through our present encounter with it into which we enter as a whole person with *all* our faculties and from the standpoint of our present concrete situation. One certainly begins with what Buber calls a "real text," but the meaning is not already in the text but comes into being in the moment in which a voice speaks to us from the text and we respond — in the present.

Martin Buber proposes an

education that is aware of the age and directed toward it, the education that leads man to a lived connection with his world and enables him to ascend from there to

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faithfulness, to standing the test, to authenticating, to responsibility, to decision, to realization.

At first glance, this statement would seem to place Buber squarely on the side of Dewey in opposition to Hutchins. But in fact, Buber is as far from Dewey on the one hand as from Hutchins on the other. Character cannot be understood in Dewey's terms, writes Buber, as a system of interpenetrating habits. The great character acts from the whole of his substance and reacts in accordance with the uniqueness of every situation. He responds to the new face which each situation wears despite all similarity to others. The situation "demands nothing of what is past. It demands presence, responsibility; it demands you."<sup>12</sup> Responsibility to Buber means responding, but no responding is possible unless one relates to what one meets as present, as unique, as "Thou." Verification for Dewey means the objective empirical verification that enregisters what one perceives in general categories; to Buber it means the authentication of one's truth in the whole of one's personal life — in the faithful meeting with the reality that one finds "over against" one. Only the teacher who has authenticated his truth in his own existence can impart it to his students in such a way that they too can gain a real relationship to it. "Human truth can be communicated only if one throws one's self into the process and answers for it with one's self."<sup>13</sup>

In language startlingly similar to Buber's, Robert M. Hutchins defines the purpose of liberal education and the primary aim of the modern university as communication between men of different attitudes, backgrounds, interests, temperaments, and philosophies. The liberal arts, according to Hutchins, are the arts of communication, and the great productions of the human mind "are the voices in the Great Conversation that constitutes the civilization of the dialogue."<sup>14</sup> How similar this call for "a genuine communion of minds" and "an understood diversity" is to Buber's own plea for the re-establishment of true dialogue can be seen from Buber's description of the education that brings together individuals with seemingly incompatible world-views:

The work of education unites the participating groups . . . into a model of the great community: not the union of the like-minded, but genuine living together of men . . . of differing minds. Community is the overcoming of *otherness* in living unity. It is not a question of exercising "tolerance," . . . or of a formal apparent understanding on a minimal basis, but of an awareness from the outside of the other's real relation to the truth.<sup>15</sup>

It is to the Socratic dialectic, however, that Hutchins turns for his model of "the civilization of the dialogue," and his aim is "a definition of the real points of agreement and disagreement" — "a summation of the possibilities of thought, of the methods of analyzing, relating and understanding ideas."<sup>16</sup>

Buber also calls for a Socratic clarification of concepts. The use of concepts without a clear knowledge of their significance, Buber writes, leads to a confusion and empty talk that disrupts society. Teachers should inculcate responsibility with regard to concepts and speech, and classrooms should be turned into experimental

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laboratories where concepts have their reliability tested. "This applies especially in the realm of the humanities, and with particular force to the social sciences. It is here that the Socratic system begins to hold sway."<sup>17</sup> But, as Matti A. Sainio has pointed out, clarification of concepts is only the first stage on the way to understanding between men. This stage is not yet education in the proper sense of the word but only the creation of the presuppositions for education. Buber does not accept the view of those who would reduce the teacher's function to that of asking Socratic questions. His demand for genuineness in the educational relationship means that a teacher may not ask unreal questions, questions to which he already knows the full answer.<sup>18</sup> True "otherness" is not just otherness of views and minds but of persons. "Dialogue" that does not recognize this is really monologue. Real personal contact, the confronting of one human entity by another, is the root and basis of education, according to Buber. "What is wanted is true reciprocity through the interchange of experiences between the matured mind and the mind that is in the process of formation. . . . What is sought is a truly reciprocal conversation in which both sides are full partners." The teacher leads and directs this conversation, and he enters it without any restraint. The teacher should ask genuine questions, and the student in turn should give the teacher information concerning his experiences and opinions. Conversely, when the teacher is asked a question by the student, his reply should proceed from the depths of his own personal experience.<sup>19</sup>

Men understand one another not through finding some universal element that they share in common, but through the establishment of a living communication that does not abolish the other's differences but recognizes from his side his real relation to the truth. The meaning that emerges from such dialogue is not located in the objective or in the subjective but in the *between*. The interpreter does not *possess* the meaning of a work, Buber points out. He must rediscover it anew in genuine meeting, and it is through just such discovery that the teacher is able to communicate the meaning of a text to his students.

Perhaps I am discussing a text from the Bible. It has been interpreted countless times and in countless ways. I know that no interpretation, and now not even mine, coincides with the original meaning of the text. I know that my interpreting, like every other, is conditioned through my being. But if I attend as faithfully as I can to what it contains of word and texture, of sound and rhythmic structure, of open and hidden connections, my interpretation will not have been made in vain — I find something, I have found something. And if I show what I have found, I guide him who lets himself be guided to the reality of the text. Him whom I teach, I expose to the working forces of the text that I have experienced.<sup>20</sup>

Buber's approach to education can be put into practice more easily in a modern progressive college than it can in the old system of straight lectures, enormous classes, objective examinations, and fragmented and over-specialized curricula. Small classes, class discussion, the participation of the teacher in the discussion, the individual conference, the emphasis upon what the student really learns — all



these make possible real dialogue for the teacher whose true aim is to establish it. Yet as Buber's dialogue may not be confused with Socratic dialectic, neither may it be confused with "individual education" as it first took shape in progressive schools. An undue emphasis on the student's development of his creative powers or on his ingestion of the environment in accordance with subjective need and interest has often led progressive educators to ignore the confrontation with the person of the teacher and with the "Thou" of the writer that is essential to the student's growth.<sup>21</sup> In this encounter the reality that the teacher and writer present to the student comes alive for him: it is transformed from the potential, abstract, and unrelated to the actual, concrete, and present immediacy of a personal and even, in a sense, a reciprocal relationship. This means that no real learning takes place unless the student participates, but it also means that the student must encounter something really "other" than himself before he can learn. This type of educational relationship is no compromise combination of "subjectivity" and "objectivity." It is the dialogue between the "I" and the "Thou" in which the "I" takes part as a whole being and yet recognizes the genuine otherness of the "Thou."<sup>22</sup>

Liberal education at its best asserts both that the curriculum should be adapted to the development and interests of the student and that it should be an expression of the interests and values of the teacher. Yet it lacks any principle to reconcile these two criteria. "The task of the teacher in the humanities," writes Harold Taylor, President of Sarah Lawrence College, "is to find the poems, novels, plays, paintings, music, philosophies, ideas, which can affect the student and integrate his present values with those of the artists and thinkers." Yet he also states that the teacher should choose the content of his courses according to his own intellectual interests. The task of the philosopher as a teacher in the college of liberal arts, according to Taylor, "is not only to review critically what is known and to lay before the student the materials of learning," but also "to present a point of view in which he believes and which can serve his students as a place for their own thinking to begin." In the best situation, writes Taylor, "the course consists of work in the books, ideas, and problems in which the teacher is most interested and about which both he and his students have a serious concern to learn."<sup>23</sup> But it is not the expression of individual interests and adaptation to the social environment that produces such a mutually meaningful curriculum and teaching situation, as so many liberal and Deweyite educators think. It is the reciprocal contact between teacher and student, the teacher's selection in his own person of the effective world, and the teacher's act of experiencing the other side.<sup>24</sup> The most fruitful alternative to the traditional approach to college teaching, in my opinion, is neither Robert Hutchins' "Great Books" theory nor John Dewey's pragmatism, but Martin Buber's concept of education as dialogue.

## NOTES

<sup>21</sup>Martin Buber, *Die Schriften über das dialogische Prinzip* (Heidelberg, Verlag Lambert Schneider, 1954), "Elemente des Zwischenmenschlichen," Section 4 — "Auferlegung und



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Erschliessung," pp. 273-78. Cf. also Martin Buber, "Distance and Relation," trans. by Ronald Gregor Smith, *The Hibbert Journal*, XLIX (January 1951), pp. 111f. English translations of "Elements of the Inter-Human" and "Distance and Relation" appear in *Psychiatry*, May, 1957.

<sup>2</sup>Martin Buber, *Between Man and Man*, trans. by Ronald Gregor Smith, New York, Macmillan, 1947. "Dialogue," pp. 20-27, 27, 29f. (Used by permission of the Macmillan Co.); "The Question to the Single One," pp. 60-65; "Educational," pp. 93-101. "Distance and Relation," *op. cit.*, pp. 110-13. For an extended exposition of Buber's basic philosophy of education see my article, "Martin Buber's Philosophy of Education," *Educational Theory*, VI, 2 (April 1956), pp. 95-104. For a comprehensive presentation of the philosophical anthropology, the philosophy of dialogue, the theory of knowledge, and the attitude toward ethics that underlie Bubers' philosophy of education, see my book, *Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue* (Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1955) Chapters X, XI, XIII, XIV, XIX, XX, XXII.

<sup>3</sup>Jacques Maritain, *Education at the Crossroads* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1943), pp. 4-8; Robert M. Hutchins, *The Conflict in Education in a Democratic Society* (New York, Harper & Bros., 1953), pp. 1, 68-75, 81.

<sup>4</sup>Martin Buber, *Reden über das Judentum* (Berlin, Schocken Verlag, 1932), "Cherut," my translation; Matti A. Sainio, *Pädagogisches Denken bei Martin Buber*, Jyväskylä Kasvatustieteellisen Seuran Julkaisu XII, Acta Academiae Paedagogicae Jyväskyläensis XII (Jyväskylä Yliopistoyhdistys, 1955), pp. 26f.

<sup>5</sup>*Between Man and Man*, *op. cit.*, "What Is Man?," p. 160.

<sup>6</sup>John L. Childs, "The Educational Philosophy of John Dewey" in Paul A. Schilpp, ed., *The Philosophy of John Dewey*, Vol. I of *The Library of Living Philosophers* (New York, Tudor Press, 1939), p. 425; cf. pp. 422, 424, 426f. Cf. also John Dewey, *The Problems of Men* (New York, Philosophical Library, 1946), pp. 90f.

<sup>7</sup>*Between Man and Man*, "The Education of Character," p. 104. (The translation of "Möglichkeit" as "possibility" is my correction of Smith who, quite misleadingly, particularly for our present purposes, rendered it as plural.) Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. by Ronald Gregor Smith (Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1937), pp. 62-65. "Distance and Relation," *op. cit.*, pp. 112f. In terminology identical with that which Buber employs in *I and Thou*, Jacques Maritain points out the significance for education of the distinction between "personality" and "individuality." But Maritain identifies personality with spirit and soul, thereby losing the true wholeness of the person and throwing us back into the old mind-body dualism. *Education at the Crossroads*, *op. cit.*, pp. 8f., 16, 34.

<sup>8</sup>*The Conflict in Education*, *op. cit.*, pp. 88f.; cf. pp. 70-73.

<sup>9</sup>John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (New York, The Macmillan Co., 1929), pp. 93, 227; Childs, *op. cit.*, p. 430. Cf. Dewey, *The Problems of Men*, *op. cit.*, pp. 86f., 90, 136f.

<sup>10</sup>Martin Buber, "Adult Education in Israel," *The Torch*, publication of The National Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs, Spring 1952, pp. 7-10; *Between Man and Man*, "Education of Character," p. 104.

<sup>11</sup>Martin Buber, *Pointing the Way: Collected Essays*, trans. and edited by Maurice S. Friedman (New York, Harper & Bros., 1957), "Education and World-View" (last essay in Part II, "Dimensions of Dialogue").

<sup>12</sup>*Pointing the Way*, *op. cit.*, "Education and World-View"; *Between Man and Man*, "The Education of Character," pp. 111-16.

<sup>13</sup>Martin Buber, *Israel and the World* (New York, Schocken Books, 1948), "The Prejudices of Youth," p. 46.

<sup>14</sup>Robert M. Hutchins, *The University of Utopia* (Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1953), pp. 67f.; *The Conflict in Education*, *op. cit.*, pp. 81f., 89f., 93, 95f., 102-05.

<sup>15</sup>*Pointing the Way*, *op. cit.*, "Education and World-View."

<sup>16</sup>*The Conflict in Education*, *op. cit.*, pp. 95f., 104f.

<sup>17</sup>Martin Buber, "A New Venture in Adult Education," *The Hebrew University in*

*Jerusalem*, Semi-Jubilee Volume (Jerusalem, The Hebrew University, April 1950), pp. 117f.

<sup>18</sup>Sainio, *Pädagogisches Denken bei Martin Buber*, *op. cit.*, pp. 40, 42.

<sup>19</sup>Buber, "A New Venture in Adult Education," *op. cit.*, pp. 118f.

<sup>20</sup>*Pointing the Way*, "Education and World-View."

<sup>21</sup>Dialogical education is not "self-education," as Matti Sainio thinks. Recognizing Buber's opposition to the idealistic-intellectualistic educational tradition of Locke and Hebart, Sainio mistakenly identifies Buber with the vitalist and immanentist stream of pedagogy running from Rousseau, Pestalozzi, and Froebel to Eduard Spranger, though he does recognize some important differences in his actual comparisons and contrasts between Buber and these thinkers. Cf. *Pädagogisches Denken bei Martin Buber*, *op. cit.*, pp. 47, 62-70, 72.

<sup>22</sup>A particularly pregnant, if unintentional, illustration of this dialogical quality of education is the theory of "educational syndromes" developed by Ruth Monroe. While working in a progressive college dedicated to individual education, this psychologist discovered that students may be ranged on a scale between two extreme points in accordance with the way in which they learn. On the one end of the scale is the "rigid" or "conscientious" student who is characterized by a thorough fulfillment of all assignments but an absence of any real, personal relationship to the material studied. On the other end is the "scattered" student, who develops a gratifying personal relationship to the subject matter, but is incapable of distinguishing between his own personal interests and those of the people whom he is reading about. Ruth Learned Munroe, *Teaching the Individual*, *Sarah Lawrence Studies*, ed. by Esther Raushenbush (New York, Columbia University Press, 1942). It is clear that the first type of student fails to learn through too much "objectivity," the second through too much "subjectivity." The ideal student, therefore, would be the one who established a personal relationship with his material and at the same time sees it as really other than himself, in short, the one who enters into a genuine dialogue with it.

<sup>23</sup>Harold Taylor, *On Education and Freedom* (Reprinted by permission of the publisher, Abelard-Shuman Limited. Copyright 1954 by Harold Taylor), pp. 157f., 161, 212f., 215f., 239.

<sup>24</sup>Harold Taylor himself envisages liberal education as including a "reversal of roles" similar to Buber's "experiencing the other side": "Dewey, James, and Whitehead thought their way into the consciousness of those who are learning, and could see educational problems intuitively and immediately from the point of view of the learner. They worked from there to the demands which such knowledge of the learner placed upon the art of the teacher. This was the beginning of a revolution in education, in the reversal of roles between demands placed unthinkingly upon students by teachers, and demands placed thoughtfully upon teachers because of the nature of the student and of learning itself. This is . . . the morality of liberalism in the sympathy, affection, and understanding it insists upon if there is to be a liberation of human talents." *On Education and Freedom*, *op. cit.*, pp. 159f.

## On Being a Christian Professor

RICHARD N. BENDER

Who among us can so manipulate words and the concepts they call up as to express with some accuracy the nature of the rebirth in Jesus Christ? Certainly the poets, whose business it is to convey through words insights the words themselves cannot suggest, have come closer to such expression than have either the philosophers or the theologians.

One of the great poets of twentieth century religious insight — though he is ordinarily thought of as a preacher — is George A. Buttrick. He has likened the intangible appeal of Jesus to the enticement of great music. Just as Fritz Kreisler could take a bit of wood and glue and cat gut and make them sing like an angel chorus, writes Buttrick, so Jesus, using a cruel cross as an instrument and his own broken body as a bow, has played a hymn of life which, when once it has penetrated into the utmost recesses of our being, will never let us go. This, I submit, is the essence of the rebirth in Jesus Christ: To be captured and changed by a life whose appeal is at once intangible and unquestionably real.

To be Christian is to be *changed* from the status of a mere creature into a son of God, and to know with a clear-eyed assurance that we are "heirs of God; joint heirs with Jesus Christ." To be Christian is to surrender to, to identify ourselves with, to invest our capacities in, the love of God which has sought us out and breathed into us the breath of life.

This way of defining the state of being Christian ignores completely the question of theological orthodoxy and the lack of it. The question of authority, whether ecclesiastical or biblical, is not raised. This way of defining the Christian sidesteps the always intriguing questions of just where one stands in the developing "Christian tradition," or on problems of metaphysics, or in epistemological theory. Neither personal piety nor moral rectitude is mentioned.

This is not to say that any of these considerations is irrelevant; they are extremely relevant and doubly so for those who have a scholarly concern. Yet, relevant as they are, none among the great diversity of answers to these various problems is a property of the Christian life. Perhaps most of all this description of the Christian centralizes commitment to live in love rather than commitment to a set of propositions. In this most profound sense we are saved not by orthodoxy, nor by good works, but by faith.

A word or two more are requisite, especially concerning the term "professor." This term was deliberately selected in lieu of either "scholar" or "teacher"

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## THE CHRISTIAN SCHOLAR

Whether the term "professor" usually connotes all that I shall read into it, I shall use the term here to refer to that person who is at once scholar and teacher. He regards knowledge and wisdom as values, and he devotes a major amount of his time and effort to their discovery and rediscovery. At the same time, he is both catalytic agent and disciplinarian to aspiring minds. His love of wisdom is matched by a hate of ignorance, and he seeks to motivate, to inform, and to empower the minds of his students.

When in this connection we speak of "the Christian professor," let us not think in terms of a Christian who happens to be a professor, or vice versa. Rather, let us understand "Christian professor" to be a unique species of professor; a professor whose reconciliation to God is reflected in all that he does as scholar and teacher. Indeed, the fundamental purpose of this paper is to explore the manner in which the Christian experience expresses itself in the professional life of the Christian professor.

### I

The Christian professor looks upon his professional life as fulfillment of his calling, his vocation under God. The call to Christian discipleship must always be a call to action, a call to be, a call to become.

Man devotes more of his time and his energy to his work than to any other concern. It is in and through his work that he finds the most tangible expression of what he is and what he treasures most. Take, for example, the matter of marital love. On his wedding day a man solemnly promises "to have and to hold, from this day forward; for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do us part." As the years unfold, how does he fulfil this pledge? Probably chief among several ways is his daily devotion to his profession, as a workman who need not be ashamed; as a husband and father who provides within his means for those who depend upon him; as a craftsman whose integrity is established and whose name his children can be proud to bear.

So it is as well with the Christian commitment. While work is not the only concern of the Christian, dedication of one's skill and one's labor to God is a chief concern. In the early church, Christian discipleship apart from such dedication would have been inconceivable. But today labor has been so completely secularized and Christian obligation has been so successfully sealed off from such strategic areas of experience that even Christians are rapidly losing the vision of divine vocation.

The Christian professor is called of God to study and to teach. Through his daily work he expresses, on the one hand, his response to this call, and, on the other, his responsible participation in the common human enterprise as a Christian and as a person.

Work . . . is the appropriate way in which Faith seeks again and again to work itself out. Work stands in relation to worship as a co-ordinate and correlative moment which

## ON BEING A CHRISTIAN PROFESSOR

continually arises out of the vision of God and continually seeks the renewal of that vision. Work may be any of an infinite variety—verbal, manual, social, according to the manifold gifts which we, as unique individual persons, display. But work which deserves to be counted as a component in Christian religion will need to be marked by the integrity and devotion which a God of truth and life requires of those who profess to be in good conscience his worshippers and servants.<sup>1</sup>

### II

The Christian professor is nurtured in the brotherhood of the Christian Church. My own doctrine of the Church is not at all sophisticated. The Church, as I think of it, is the community of those who have been captivated and changed by the love of God. It is a community of commitment, and it expresses its common life in worship and in co-operative deeds of Christian service. It is a human community and therefore at any point in its life reflects all the virtues and ideals, all the sins and evil design of its human components. Yet it is timeless in its fellowship, and at its best it binds together Christian disciples of every age and of every cultural heritage despite all their diversities. The Church is a community created by the Holy Spirit — the *koinonia*.

It is the love of God that has made us sons of God. It is he who has loved us without question regarding our worth. As sons of God we are enjoined to love, but this is possible only because we have been loved. In the very depth of human nature there is the need to love, but this need can never be fulfilled except as we are loved. "We love because he has first loved us." It is the Church, "the beloved community," that is the channel through which the love of God works in human experience. We can remain reconciled to God only as we experience his love through the brotherhood and are thus empowered to love. In this most profound sense there is no salvation outside the Church.

The Church is by no means identical with any ecclesiastical institution. Yet the values of Christian insight can be served better by institutions than by the isolated and random efforts of individuals going it alone, however capable and however dedicated. The essential unity of the Church depends neither upon organic identification of all Christian institutions nor upon their diversity but upon the willingness of the Church to be used of God according to his will for particular times and circumstances.

Imperfect as all existing organized churches are, the organized Church at its best is an effort to make the beloved community a tangible force and fact in the daily life. The Christian professor can no more refuse to participate in this effort than he as scholar can refuse to participate in the faltering efforts of an imperfect university to actualize educational ideals.

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Calhoun, "The Day's Work as Vocation," an address delivered at the Institute of Higher Education, Nashville, Tennessee, July, 1953.



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Not only is the Christian professor nurtured in the brotherhood of the Christian Church: He has an indispensable contribution to give to the health and growth of the Church in every age. In this connection, E. Harris Harbison says:

Most historians . . . would agree . . . that 'religion without learning or learning without religion' has usually proved injurious to the Church. Like every other religion, Christianity has been periodically plagued by its lunatic fringe of fanatics, obscurantists, and purveyors of superstition and fear. There never has been any really effective remedy against these people except the power of the mind, the patient efforts of an educated ministry. And one might argue that an educated ministry in any age is never any stronger than its few real scholars and seminal minds. It is they who carry out the top-level intellectual jobs which in the long run have much to do with determining the quality of the thinking and writing, the preaching and teaching, of any Christian generation. They study to purify the religious tradition itself, to relate it to the surrounding culture, and to take account of scientific discovery. . . . Their work gives the Christian religion its chance to grow in the surrounding culture. They cultivate the soil, prune away dead branches, and engraft fresh stock. God grants the growth.<sup>2</sup>

### III

The Christian professor takes seriously his integrity as a scholar and as a Christian. As an absolute minimum, such integrity demands professional competence in a chosen field of study and teaching. It demands as well efficient employment of the tools and techniques of his craft.

Scholarly integrity requires one to seek objectivity in research or experimentation and to be critical in interpretation. Faith and devotion, however genuine or even fervent, become liabilities when they are permitted to influence the selection or handling of data or to determine interpretation.

It is quite clear by now that the ideal of objectivity in scholarship is impossible of achievement. This has been shown repeatedly and with increasing thoroughness. This was a necessary task. The idol of objectivity had to be smashed to free the scholarly mind from the fear of philosophy. Yet the work of idol smashers seldom stops with the necessary task. There is an almost inevitable iconoclastic fall-out. In this case it has been the growing impression that the ideal of objectivity even at the point of research is being discarded. Even though we must recognize that the most exacting scholarship can never be wholly objective, there are stages in the search for knowledge at which the entire enterprise stands or falls upon the ability to approximate real objectivity.

What has been under legitimate attack has not been the ideal of objectivity at all but the omniscience claimed in the name of perfect objectivity and the refusal to recognize that there comes a point in the quest for knowledge at which objectivity is irrelevant.

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<sup>2</sup> E. Harris Harbison, *The Christian Scholar in the Age of the Reformation*. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1956. p. 168-169.

## ON BEING A CHRISTIAN PROFESSOR

This developing failure to be perceptive in the attack upon objectivity — this iconoclastic fall-out — poses a threat to scholarly integrity. For instance, take this kind of argument which is by no means exceptional:

All investigation begins with certain assumptions whose validity cannot be pre-established. They are the foundations upon which the research and analysis proceed, and they are the ultimate points of reference in evaluation. To go behind them is impossible, for to do so would simply be to adopt another set of categories whose validity must be accepted. The Christian revelation is to us such a starting point. It has its own categories within which the search for knowledge must be carried on. These categories are self-validating. While we recognize the limited usefulness of reason and scientific method, we reserve the right to correct results thus obtained by reference to the Christian revelation.

This kind of argument, I submit, is subtly specious and contradictory to contemporary scholarship. It presupposes a revealed metaphysics and epistemology. It exempts the alleged "Christian revelation" from re-examination in the light of new data. It thus inevitably endows a particular theological interpretation with infallibility and, if consistent, is prepared to sacrifice intellectual integrity in deference to such interpretation. It employs criteria exterior to the investigation to set the limits within which results can be achieved. It is a form of obscurantism since it leaves no means by which the Christian categories of redemption, grace, incarnation, judgment, and forgiveness can be validated save by fiat. It illustrates a need among Christians for a resuscitated concern for objective scholarship.

When the Christian professor is critical of the university and of the educational enterprise, he is so as a responsible member of the university community. His criticism arises from his love for the university and his dedication to the ideals of education which he believes are of God. Not only does he acknowledge complicity in the sin of the university; he acknowledges with gratitude what he owes to the university, and this many times will include even those awakenings of mind and spirit whereby he was brought to the love of God.

Now it is the very integrity of the Christian professor, his dedication to valid scholarship, that makes him aware of the limitations upon human reason and the invincible ignorance of human knowledge. He knows, perhaps even better than did Santayana, the truth that

Our knowledge is a torch of smoking pine  
That lights the pathway but one step ahead  
Across a void of mystery and dread.<sup>a</sup>

The very search for knowledge is an enterprise in quest of a faith. The faith required by the scholar, the researcher, the scientist, the logician, is at root a

<sup>a</sup> George Santayana, "Faith," a poem.

common one and by no means simple. It is a faith that the universe and our life within it "make sense," that there is a fundamental integrity about reality, that pattern rather than chaos is the fact, and that if the search be continued long enough and diligently enough the pattern will be discernible. There is that additional inferred article of faith: not only that human life makes sense but that human values have validity in the universe and that human persons are worth educating. Without a minimal faith such as this the preservation of documents, the attempt to translate and interpret ancient manuscripts, and the incredible labor carried on day by day at the cutting edge of research would be hollow absurdities.

Yet none of this is by any means certain. The contradictories of all the foregoing propositions can be argued with considerable effectiveness, even utilizing the data translators and researchers and experimenters have turned up. The very diligence and meticulousness of scholarship underscore the urgency with which the scholarly commitment demands an undergirding faith. This faith the enterprise itself may reinforce, but the enterprise can neither create nor sustain such faith.

The Christian professor knows himself to stand in a new relationship to God and his fellow man. This is a fact, even as his commitment as a scholar is a fact. This knowledge is in the nature of a private fact because there is no public referent involved. Yet it is subject to the same kind of verification that is open to many private facts whose validity must be accepted as a basis for living and acting. This is not the place for explorations in epistemology, logic, and semantics, but I would want to record the conviction that the faith of the Christian professor is not to be equated with credulity nor disqualified as a mere report of one's subjective emotional state. For the Christian it is the conviction that God is real and active in human affairs and that man's deepest need is reconciliation with God which gives the requisite meaning to his commitment as scholar and teacher.

The faith of the Christian professor is spawned and fed from several sources. We have observed already that he is nurtured in love by the Christian community. The massive inspirational treasury of the Judeo-Christian religious tradition, made available in the Holy Scriptures and other literature, is indispensable. The Christian professor can no more honestly remain ignorant of that treasury than he can ignore the classical works in his field of professional training. Yet additionally, there is what the theologians would call the contemporary witness of the Holy Spirit — "The Spirit itself bears witness to our spirits that we are heirs of God."

Within the Christian family all of these and other sources of the faith are acknowledged. There is difference in emphasis. I incline toward greatest emphasis upon the latter — the contemporary witness of the Holy Spirit. If I may venture to phrase this in terms less theological I find the strongest (though not the exclusive) support of my Christian faith in *empirical evidence*. In still other terms what I experience concerning myself, what I observe in other persons, and what has happened and is now happening in human history all seem to me to sustain the heart

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of the Christian affirmation concerning man and God. In the absence of such empirical verification even the scriptures and the Christian community could not long sustain the faith of the free critical scholar.

Integrity as scholar and as Christian must be reflected in the critical work of the Christian professor. He regards the Christian affirmation as a major fact of which the entire scholarly enterprise must take account. This affirmation does not reveal a metaphysics nor an epistemology. It does not afford the Christian data for scholarly research which are unavailable to other competent investigators. It does not afford infallible insight amidst the complexities of personal and social ethics. But the Christian affirmation does bring a new dimension to the search for knowledge; it offers new hypotheses regarding meaning and significance; and it awakens an imperative regarding worth and moral responsibility.

Thus, the Christian professor because of his integrity will hold as insupportable any metaphysics which disregards the evidence of conscious purpose and tender concern at the heart of reality. He will regard as inadequate any epistemology that limits knowledge to a description and observation of sensory objects. He will on sound critical grounds deny the comprehensive adequacy of behavioristic psychology, of determinism in sociology, of chartless relativity in values and morality, and of materialistic interpretations of history. It is one thing to deny, as has been done here, that the Christian faith must be accepted as both starting point and ultimate reference, never to be called up for re-examination. It is quite another to assert that for the Christian professor his basic assumptions regarding the nature and meaning of his field of competence, his critical work as scholar, and his perspective upon what constitutes adequacy in interpretation will reflect his conviction that the Christian affirmation is true. This is what now is being asserted.

The Christian professor is called of God to live productively amidst the tensions of faith and the critical spirit. Gone forever is the comfortable naiveté of atheistic naturalism. Unavailable to him is the reassuring credulity of blind faith. He has been laid hold upon by a love that will not let him go, that confronts him in the midst of his professional task and brings meaning to the otherwise meaningless. Yet he knows his own limitations, the corruption even of the vision of God. He is aware of the absurdities, even the incredible immoralities, that have been perpetrated in the name of the Holy Spirit. Thus, his search for knowledge as scholar must reflect his conviction as Christian. Still, he alone within the Christian family is sufficiently trained and equipped to serve as critic in the unending task of refining the human interpretation of revelation. He must live as if his were the faith of certainty; at the same time he must be most severely critical of the convictions he cherishes most. Only thus can he maintain his integrity as a workman called of God.

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### IV

Both his responsible citizenship in the university community and his philosophy of education will reflect the Christian professor's vocation under God.

On the one hand, he must work alongside his colleagues, utilizing the same methods upon the same data. The Christian chemist will claim no special data regarding chemical elements unavailable to the non-Christian chemist, nor will the Christian sociologist, psychologist, historian, anthropologist, or biologist concerning theirs. In the midst of the common task the Christian professor will work within the new dimension. He will seek to communicate as a person the knowledge of the reality of God in terms meaningful to the university community. He will undertake to develop the perspectives and follow through the inferences and interpretations this new dimension brings to the intellectual disciplines. He will work for an educational program which expresses a Christian educational philosophy.

On the other hand, the Christian professor must be a teacher. In his classes education will be not less but more than it has been heretofore; not less of technical competence, nor of exacting scholarship, nor of intellectual integrity. But he will teach in the knowledge that he deals intimately and decisively with the lives of others. Archibald MacLeish speaks of "the terrible responsibility of the teacher," to decide and teach, "not merely to select and report."<sup>4</sup> And it is just that, a terrible responsibility to draw upon the past and present with such knowledge and insight as to motivate and empower an emerging generation, prepared in relevant skills and sensitive to the values that matter most!

To meet this responsibility will require all one's skill as pedagogue. Piety can in no wise substitute for the refining fire of exacting intellectual discipline. Even sound opinions cannot be accepted in lieu of the capacity to read a classic with comprehension or to master experimental technique. Rapport with students is indispensable yet nonproductive until it focuses upon the subject matter of the course at hand. The Christian teacher is not first evangelist nor public relations man. He is first of all seeking to involve the student in the search for knowledge, to create an intellectual and spiritual ferment. His very concern for his students as persons will lead many of them to think of him as a severe taskmaster.

Yet he will know that his subject is not well taught except as he opens up to the student new perspectives, some of which will be essentially religious in nature. He will feel that his teaching is not really thorough unless it brings students face to face with some of the persistent problems of human life to which the Christian faith speaks. Then it is that he as honest teacher can speak of his own faith without doing violence either to the subject matter or to the freedom of the student's

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<sup>4</sup> Archibald MacLeish, *Ferment in Education*, Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1948. Cited by Kenneth I. Brown in *Not Minds Alone*, New York, Harpers, 1954, p. 85.



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thought. Then it is that he may succeed in conveying his own sense of the scholarly vocation to the student.

Such teaching as this has always been difficult but never as much so as in the immediate years ahead. To illustrate: the movement within the twentieth century from industrialization to automation is well under way. In higher education, as elsewhere, automation is almost certainly on its way. To put it in terms that even now are really not fantastic, the necessity of serving as teacher to 25,000 students by television while overseeing four-hundred Ph.D. dissertations per year will require a complete revision of time-honored conceptions of the teacher-student relation.

Already we are a long country mile from Arthur Guiterman's characterization of education as Mark Hopkins on one end of a log and James Garfield on the other. I wish I knew how the precious interpersonal processes of education can be preserved as we move into mass production. I do not know how, and to be honest, I am not sure they can be preserved. So far as I know, all existing books on teaching methods are obsolete in the face of the demands immediately ahead. Unless new and creative experiments designed to meet these demands are carried through successfully and new books written, the great professorial chairs of our universities may yet be occupied by properly adjusted univac machines.

When teaching is seen in such dimensions as these — the terrible responsibility of the teacher, incredibly complicated and confused by the utterly new problems now to be confronted — it must be regarded as hopelessly presumptive, except as one becomes an instrument of a Power and Purpose standing clear of our ignorance and sin. It is to this demanding task of teaching that the Christian professor is called.

To be a Christian professor is to live responsibly in the life and enterprise of the contemporary university and to witness that God has laid claim upon the university for his own purposes. Our chief objective is to demonstrate the relevance of the Christian faith to the legitimate goals of higher education. That some or all of this may be by all available signs impossible is beside the point. The imperative is that we accept the commitment. Success and failure may both be useful to the purposes of God. Indeed, only he can truly estimate success. The ideal, even when unachieved, does set the criterion for aspiration.

## Jefferson and Hamilton

### REBUTTAL BY THE AUTHOR

Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., in his commentary upon my article in the March issue of *The Christian Scholar*, twice attributes a statement to Hamilton that it is very doubtful he ever made. Three records of Hamilton's speech to the Constitutional Convention on June 18, 1787 have been preserved: his own outline and the separate notes taken by James Madison and Judge Robert Yates. One of these only, the notes taken by Yates, contain the quoted words that, if the rich and well-born were given "a distinct, permanent share in the government," they would "ever maintain good government." The other two sources give a more balanced view in which Hamilton argued for the principle of the British Constitution with its separation of power between a monarch and two legislative bodies, one the changing representatives of the mass of the people, the other the permanent aristocracy, because none of the three were virtuous or could be trusted with absolute power.

Vernon L. Parrington, certainly no Hamiltonian, admitted that the Yates' quotation "denied the fundamental premise of [Hamilton's] political philosophy," and the closest approximation to the statement in Madison's more complete notes has Hamilton saying in defense of the House of Lords that it formed "a permanent barrier against every pernicious innovation, whether attempted on the part of the Crown or of the Commons."

Anti-Hamiltonian historians, however, have seized upon the quotation because it justifies what they want to believe about his political philosophy. It has been quoted more frequently than almost any other statement attributed to Hamilton except his remark about the people being a great beast, but it certainly should never be used without at least indicating its source.

Concerning the rest of Mr. Schlesinger's comments as well as those of Mr. Harbison and Mr. Trinterud, I have little to add. If I wrote the things they say I wrote or attempted to do what they say I did, then the article did not communicate what I was trying to say. Another attempt would probably have no better results.

Thomas P. Govan

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### LETTER FROM A READER

Dear Editor:

May I say a few words concerning Thomas Govan's article on Jefferson and Hamilton and the three replies thereto in *The Christian Scholar* of March 1957.

Granted that Dr. Govan may have oversimplified the contrasting views of Hamilton and Jefferson, and granted that he may have oversimplified the relation between theological understanding and political philosophy or practice (Professor

JEFFERSON AND HAMILTON

Harbison's phrase is "too neat"); still, it seems to me a sound article as well as a very stimulating one. I think the replies by-pass his main contentions (and it really does not seem that Dr. Trinterud carefully read Dr. Govan's article at all):

1) In his discussion of Christian orthodoxy, Dr. Govan is clearly not concerned with the whole gamut of Christian profession, but here only with the Christian understanding of the root of evil and injustice. Christianity has always said that this root is sin, *our* sin, and not, at its root, social inequity, urbanization, ignorance, the sin of some other, or anything else. To exempt any group of human activity (including the Church) from sin, is to make it an idol. This is that part of Christian understanding with which Dr. Govan is concerned. In relation to this, Hamilton describes life with a realistic appreciation of human selfishness which accords with a Christian doctrine of sin much more closely than Jefferson (whether or not Hamilton was in other ways much of a Christian). And such divergent philosophies or theologies have genuine consequences in political theory.

2) We had better drop the vocabulary of "heresy" and "inquisition". It is so loaded emotionally that I think we do not hear each other. Professor Harbison is very perceptive, but I think the use of the term and metaphor of "inquisitor" seriously misleading. Dr. Govan's article is an attack on inquisitions — both the classic Inquisition and any other. Dr. Govan affirms his belief in God's truth *and* his (Christian) conviction that no one man or group can be safely held to possess this truth or God's virtue. All of us are under sin; all need to be checked. This need is as important to democracy as its complement: all are under God's care; all need freedom and deserve to be heard. To omit the need for checks and the protection against anarchy is to *invite* totalitarianism. (Obviously, Dr. Trinterud, Dr. Govan does not *equate* Jefferson with Stalin, Bonaparte, etc.) Is this not true?

Philip T. Zabriskie  
New York City

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## Books and Publications

*History of Christianity (1650-1950); Secularization of the West*

by James Hastings Nichols, New York, The Ronald Press, 1956. 493 pages.  
\$5.00.

This work makes a distinct contribution to the literature of modern clerical and lay history. It contains no new material, but it admirably fulfills the intention of the author to present in a single volume a comprehensive picture of the developments in Christianity during the last three centuries. All aspects of these changes with which Professor Nichols deals have been more fully treated in specialized studies, among which are his own, but a new appreciation of their dimension and significance awaits those who see them here so expertly related and synthesized. The volume is directed to the "student of Christian history — the college undergraduate, the seminary student, the clergyman and the interested layman" and, while it assumes a considerable knowledge of background material, justifying the suggestion of keeping at hand a standard textbook on modern history, all of these groups will find in its reading a rich reward.

During these centuries the liturgy and doctrines of the various Christian disciplines have seemed to remain substantially the same, but, in truth, a veritable revolution has taken place in the attitudes of Christians as to the relationship which their religion should or does bear to their cultures. The general nature of that transformation is declared in the sub-title. With such a thesis it comes as no surprise that what we trace here is less a history of the church than a history of secular institutions with their increasing influence reflected in permutations on the Christian attitude and life. The skill of the author lies in not only unravelling the marvelously complex threads of this story and placing them in an understandable pattern but also in preserving the full sense of that complexity.

For the sake of convenience and clarity the four main divisions of Christianity—Eastern Orthodoxy, the Roman Church, Lutheranism, and the Reformed Church—are treated separately but with a full appreciation of their interdependence and the employment of frequent cross references. Chronologically the story is broken down into four periods which are seen by the author to display within themselves major elements of cohesion: from the close of the religious wars (1648) to the French Revolution, from the Revolution to 1870, from 1870 to the outbreak of World War I, and from World War II to 1950.

Within this framework Professor Nichols develops nine interacting themes which in his opinion have dominated the course of modern church history. Obviously there is the theme of geographical expansion, especially in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Secondly, he enlarges upon the influence of the civilization of the enlightenment in creating a religiously neutral culture in which political, economic, ethical and intellectual structures were increasingly emancipated



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from Christianity. Much stress is placed upon the role of Protestant pietism, with its emphasis on the individualization and internationalization of religious feeling, in assisting the adaptation of the Reformed churches to the new secular culture. Though giving a full account of the reaction which followed the enlightenment, Dr. Nichols correctly underscores the survival of a substantial portion of enlightened traditions in the present.

Paralleling, reflecting, and influencing these changes was the emergence of the modern state system within which considerations of power and glory or ethical standards quite divorced from theological context came increasingly to dictate domestic and foreign affairs of nations. Symptomatic has been the definition of the concept of "sovereignty" and its defence on military, economic, or commercial grounds, the growth of religious tolerance as a measure of indifference, and, most striking from the religious point of view, the widespread cult of nation worship, a development which the author condemns as a form of "revival of pagan tribalism."

Still another theme is found by him in the progressive autonomy of economics: the substitution for the moralist economics of the middle ages and the welfare economics of mercantilism of the amoral and free-market economics of Adam Smith.

The new science and cosmology present another variation on secularism. In place of the purposeful and value-freighted universe of Ptolemy and Aristotle there has arisen the concept of a purposeless, mechanical, and inexorable nature against which the idea of God must assume an increasingly abstract form. Where the atheism implicit in the new physics has been resisted man has often found himself "forced to nourish his faith in archaic forms of thought about the world, forms which he could not use for everyday life nor readily re-interpret into the world-view which he was in fact using." Indicative of the scientific orientation of the modern mind has been the penetration and gradual dominance of school curricula by subjects of "utility" or those reflecting political preoccupation. Within this milieu faith to many has come to occupy a "minor" or even "irrelevant" place.

All these trends, Nichols shows, have been stoutly resisted by the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches but with little success, for another theme of modern church history is seen in the steady secularization of these older churches. In its simplest form this process is illustrated by the rise of the Bolshevik state in Russia. In Roman Catholic countries, too, the priest-controlled society with its hierarchical pattern, while remaining normative, has been grudgingly compromised. But as the Roman Church has been forced to retreat on its temporal side it has progressively tightened its lines of inner discipline thus achieving in apparent defeat a startling ultramontane victory. The salient and determining feature of Catholic history, both Roman and Orthodox, in this period has been the fact that the religiously emancipated culture of the West has developed more or less independently of them and therefore become fatally mortgaged in Catholic lands with the bitter and consistent hostility of the ancient church.

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Far and away the most significant theme in the Christian history of the last three centuries has been the evolution of what Dr. Nichols calls "the Protestant Synthesis." In contrast to Roman Catholic and, to a considerable extent, Lutheran societies in which the church, wedded to economic traditionalism and political authoritarianism, demonstrated a marked inability to adjust to the new political democracy and self-disciplined cultural and economic initiative which now dominated Western Civilization, the societies in which the Reformed churches were paramount witnessed the assimilation of the church into the new culture. Indeed, in Holland and even more so in Britain and North America, Protestant Evangelicalism became intimately related to political democracy and capitalistic individualism. Indirectly, unconsciously, and primarily on the lay level it provided them with a degree of ethical discipline and responsibility lacking elsewhere. The result was the creation of a synthesis of faith and culture suggesting that of the 13th century. Dr. Nichols repeatedly underlines the thesis that this brand of ascetic Protestant secularism must be clearly differentiated from that apostate form of secularism which flourished in the Catholic countries. The individualist and reform spirit of Evangelicalism with its "non-conformist conscience" allied in England and North America with utilitarianism. In this way Protestants discovered in natural law a parallel or reflection of the divine order and on that ground could support political liberalism. The pursuit of the moral directives of natural reason thus seemed to the Puritan Christian a goal harmonious with God's will. Where painful contradictions became apparent a resolution was promised through his confidence in the inevitability of progress. Thus a free church Calvinism permeated and became identified with democracy, capitalism, and applied science and gradually, contrary to the original Puritan intention, accepted the neutralist state, economics, and culture.

A reflection of this synthesis, according to Dr. Nichols, has been denomination-alism in which the denomination makes no exclusive claims but poses only as an alternative from within the total church. Typically the denominations have reserved to themselves only the functions of worship, theological education, and an ever lessening degree of ethical discipline while delegating or surrendering most of their traditional police power to the secular state, family, or business community.

The twentieth century is seen by the author as witnessing a rapid dissolution of this Protestant synthesis. Non-Christian nationalism and Marxism have systematically attacked or purged Christianity as preserving incompatible elements in their cultures and have attempted to replace it with neo-pagan theocracies. In defence, consciously or unconsciously, the Christian Church has shown a marked desire to reconstitute itself as a universal community and the ecumenical movement is described as the "most important development in the church history of the twentieth century." Another defensive reaction of the Church has been its growing revolt against the concept of natural law built up during the Protestant synthesis. Appeal, as in the early days of the Reformation, is increasingly made to the living word as revealed in the Bible. A thriving school of pessimistic theologians cry out

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with rising fervor for a reaffirmation of the concept of man's essential depravity and testify to their own disillusionments. On the popular level this retreat is reflected in a tendency to "repristine the confessions and to strengthen biblical literalism."

The concluding chapter is likely to be disquieting to those readers who have been reared within the precepts of the Protestant synthesis. Though the survival of those precepts is more marked in the United States than anywhere else, Dr. Nichols sees the religious situation even here as confused and uncertain. The nations of the world are still in a process of rapid secularization and in the United States and Russia, in particular, the religion of technology and "the engineering mentality" rival Christian faith. Looking back over the sweep of three hundred years the verdict is that the mission of modern Christian churches to "penetrate and 'Christianize' civilization" has met with decreasing success. The solution to the problem of how to bridge the deepening gulf between the tone of triumphant materialism and Christian idealism is yet to be found.

It is no reflection on the essential validity of Dr. Nichols' arguments to level against his book the charge of non-objectivity. At any rate the spirit of Protestantism is evident on every page. Those sections devoted to discussing the policies of popes Pius IX, Leo XIII, Pius X, and Pius XI will read to the "liberal" like Poe's tales of horror and imagination. The recital of the machinations of Pius IX as he pursued his reactionary course leading to the formulation of the *Syllabus of Errors* (1864) and his subjection of the church itself with the dogma of infallibility (1870) is well calculated to stir the indignation of the democratically minded. The complicity of these popes in the successful plot to destroy "Liberal Catholicism," their collusion in furthering totalitarian, non-democratic, and fascist tendencies everywhere is evident, but in the narration of the more incriminating instances, specific documentation would make even more certain the judgment of guilt.

James E. King

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*In But Not Of the World:*

*A Notebook of Theology and Practice in the Local Church*

by Robert W. Spike. New York Association Press, 1957. 110 pages. \$2.00.

Academicians of all types and all ages will appreciate two virtues of this book. It does not waste words and it does not mince words. Dr. Spike's style is provocatively simple and compellingly direct. However, these virtues would be trivial unless he had something worthwhile to say, and this is his greatest virtue: he has.

Published as a study book for the forthcoming Interseminary Movement Triennial Conference on "The Nature of the Ministry We Seek," this book should by no means have its audience limited to seminarians or ministers. I would hesitate to

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say that its *appeal* would be wider, for this is not an *appealing* book; rather I would say that it needs a much wider audience, and a much wider audience needs it. The reason for this judgment is that the purpose of the book is to delineate the doctrinal basis and the possible modes of Christian evangelism. Both of these tasks have been attempted before, but have suffered from either excessive jargon, superficiality, or at the other extreme, a cynical sophistication which repels rather than challenges. The present work escapes each of these pitfalls. Since the need for a clear and evocative statement on this matter is pressing, and since this is just such a statement, it deserves our attention.

Dr. Spike begins each chapter with an *episode* which depicts a typical local church situation. He then proceeds to a statement of Christian *doctrine* upon which decisions in such a situation must be based, an observation of the *culture* in American which compromises such a decision, and then a concluding section on *practice* in the local church. This last section is based in each instance upon the assumption that the Christian church, and therefore each member, is rightfully *in* but not *of* his culture.

With this as his method, he then takes up three aspects of the doctrine of the Church. The first of these is *koinonia* and its meaning in regard to the fellowship (though such an ill-used word is inadequate) of the Church; the second is the concrete nature of the Church and the churches as "the Body of Christ"; the third is the impact that belief in "the authority of the Word" should have on our church program. Each of these aspects of the doctrine of the Church has been dealt with many times. Never, at least in this reviewer's limited experience, have they been presented so that the only proper response to the presentation is decision and not debate. Yet that is the situation with Dr. Spike's book. It is for that reason that academicians can profit from the reading of it: they cannot remain "academic" about the questions it thrusts forward.

The last two chapters of the book turn to two thorny problems of evangelism: the question of salvation outside the Church, and the matter of the Church's relation to the Kingdom of God. The same chapter organization is followed, and the same freshness and sensitivity is manifest. As an example of his approach two quotations from Chapter IV are most apposite:

Rather than letting church people brighten the corner where they are or the mid-century equivalent, we should help them to understand themselves and others with the basic realism of the Christian view of man.

However, a man or woman who "accepts his acceptance by God," and has an appreciation of his own sin and pride, *does* communicate this to others in ways that are below the level of the verbal. . . . These people may not necessarily be the most articulate, nor the most learned, but these are the people who really proclaim the Word of God in the community.

As these excerpts show, the approach of this author is the most difficult, yet the most basic, possible for Christian evangelism. He outlines no "program" in the usual

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sense; and yet he does not stop with theological observations. Our "activists" are judged, for it is obvious that no vast program will accomplish evangelism. Our "academics" are judged, for it is also obvious that mere verbal acquaintance with jargon or doctrine will not suffice. Neither of these will bring us to the point where we realize that "Eschatological hope has to be about the next breath as well as the next aeon." Dr. Spike's message, in short, is a call to true repentance. This is not possible through piety, nor learning, nor activity. It comes only when we hear "the Word of God in all its mystery broken open for our health" and when we respond to this in faith and joy.

The Church needs to be acquainted with this book. And it can be read not only by seminarians, ministers and academicians, but by intelligent laymen. It is straightforward and clear, and it does not present a terminological barrier. There are certain requisites for any reader, though. Of these the first is imagination. If one has this, the book will suggest many ways in which the reader can act in his own situation. The second requisite is honesty. If one has this, he will see in its chapters not other churches, but his own; not other Christians, but himself.

Jerry Handspicker

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### *The Church, the Ministry, and Reunion*

by W. Norman Pittenger, Greenwich, Conn., The Seabury Press, 1957.  
147 pages. \$2.75.

It is commonly said that, if theologians would cease haggling over irrelevant minutiae, the problems of Christian disunity would be quickly solved. For instance, take the "order" of "Faith and Order." What difference does it make?

Out of his experience in ecumenical discussions, Norman Pittenger offers a brief answer to this question according to the teaching of the Protestant Episcopal Church. Relying on the best contemporary Biblical scholarship, he rejects the customary and boring attempt to foist the three-fold form of ministry upon Jesus or the primitive Church. Bishop, elder, and deacon have been accepted from at least the third century, however, as carrying on the same work as did the more diversified earlier ministries.

Basic to understanding the significance of "holy orders" for Christian life, according to Pittenger, is the fact that the ministry is a "ministerial priesthood," deriving both from Jesus Christ who is the only true priest and from the Church which is Christ's royal priesthood. In affirming this he explicitly rejects the heresy that the Church derives its being from the bishops or the elders or the deacons. Luther, Calvin, and Wesley would surely rejoice.

Here is offered good ground for serious consideration of reunion of the broken body of Christ. For the author calls his own denomination to repent of its sins while



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expecting the same of others. He strikes down the pretension that "the Catholic ministries" are not actually defective while stating the parallel fact that "the Protestant ministries" are also defective. He expects Catholics to welcome that authorization for preaching of the Word of God which Protestant ministries have been granted; he expects Protestants to welcome the authorization which will give the priestly character which Catholic ministries have been granted.

Such a mutual acceptance will be hard to come by, for it would mean repentance from sin. But here is one priest and theologian of one denomination who not only would speak the truth in love but also would make possible real understanding by listening to the truth in love. Would that my own denomination do some equally solid thinking on this subject! For the ministry is a problem. Our worship, our witness to the world, our whole Christian life is irrevocably bound to the nature and function and authority of the ordained ministry.

Wesley M. Stevens

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#### *The Outsider*

by Colin Wilson, Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1956. 288 pages. \$4.00.

The commotion that Mr. Wilson's book was causing a few months ago has not yet altogether subsided, and one still hears irritated splutterings from academic critics whose pique at this young London dishwasher's impudence in having decided that he had a book under his belt has not yet been assuaged. Nor has the fact of Mr. Wilson's entry into *Time's* pantheon of celebrities helped very much his cause with these people. When his book was first reviewed in this country, his critics seemed generally to feel it necessary to inquire toploftily into the reasons that might explain the extraordinarily warm reception that it had won amongst many of the most sophisticated intellectuals on the British scene. But now, at this date, what is perhaps more to the point are the reasons for the extraordinarily ferocious fusillade that was turned upon the book after its appearance in America. And here, I can only conclude that, in these golden, glorious days of the Eisenhower-Dulles dispensation, it was felt to be an impertinence for this young Englishman to suggest that ours continues to be an age that is most deeply comprehended within that darkly pessimistic tradition in modern thought that begins with Kierkegaard and Nietzsche and that runs through Heidegger and Sartre to Camus.

We had, of course, our brief flirtation over here with the poets and the philosophers of *Angst*, when, back in the 'forties, the canonization of Kafka was the high fashion of the day and when, having heard in *Vogue* of the Café de Flore and Jean-Paul Sartre, pert young ladies were tensely asking you at cocktail parties what Existentialism was. But all this, it was imagined, had been buried with those

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alienation-obsessed numbers of the *Partisan Review*, and our intellectual life had returned to "normalcy." And, of course, for secular intellectuals — and particularly the academicians — this period in the 'forties was an aberration, demanding explanation, as we were so often told, in terms of a general "failure of nerve." People had gotten confused by the crisis of the war and, forsaking the virtues of common sense and science, had made a philosophy out of their confusion — and that, said Messrs. Dewey and Hook, was the whole thing in a nutshell, so far as this Existentialist madness was concerned.

But then, last summer, the rumors began to reach us of the stir that Mr. Wilson and his book had caused in England, and, in the fall, Houghton Mifflin brought the book out, and there was the evidence of this eccentric prodigy's commitment to ideas which we had originally resisted and which we had supposed had finally been relegated to the discard.

But the legacies in modern culture to which Mr. Wilson gives his suffrage have in them a kind of stubborn vitality that will not permit their easy disposal, and I take it that the great lesson that his book has to teach us is that, when a sensitive and intelligent young person like himself seeks today to ask questions of a truly fundamental sort about the fate of man in the modern world, it is natural for his sensibility and his imagination to find their deepest anchorage in those traditions of philosophic and religious radicalism which have, in the ancient Biblical sense, been genuinely prophetic, because they have called into question the basic idolatries of the age, an age which has been committed to the positivistic religion of scientific rationalism.

Now, of course, it must be said that Mr. Wilson's book is a very untidy and often a very dull book. It is really the diary of a young man's intellectual life, and, since the young man in question is a self-educated proletarian who has not enjoyed the proving disciplines of a university training, perhaps we ought not to be surprised that his first major publication is little more than a scrapbook into which he has thrown quotations from his reading that are interlarded with commentaries sometimes remarkably perspicacious and sometimes either ludicrously ignorant or incredibly naive.

What is more disturbing, though, than the sheer disorderliness of the book and the limitations of Mr. Wilson's youthful scholarship is his fundamental uncertainty as to the real nature of his subject. It is clear, of course, that his imagination has been captured by the version of the human situation that, in the modern period, has been proposed by such artists and thinkers as Kierkegaard, Dostoevsky, Nietzsche, Kafka, Heidegger, Sartre, and Camus; and he is surely right in believing that the Myth of the Outsider which descends from this tradition bears deeply upon our own dismayed and anxious time. Nor is there anything invalid in the profound interest that he takes in the personal histories of men like Van Gogh and Nijinsky and T. E.

Lawrence, for these are figures who bore upon themselves the stigmata of the modern Alienation. And I suspect that, if he had undertaken a concentrated analysis of this body of literature and of this body of personal lore, Mr. Wilson would have produced for our generation the definitive statement on one of the most crucial phases of modern experience.

The trouble is, however, that, many things having dovetailed in Mr. Wilson's mind as a result of his transaction with all this, he is led to use the organizing principle that he has discovered with such wooden-headed determination that it becomes a Universal within whose great grasp very nearly the whole of European culture is to be comprehended. The result is that the Outsider, instead of being (as we had supposed) a special type of man produced by the cultural predicaments of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, becomes every protestant, every protagonist of heterodoxy, and every malcontent who ever managed to cause, at some time or other, a flurry, however minor, in the realm of ideas. And, of course, when his organizing principle is generalized out to such lengths, it becomes possible for Mr. Wilson's list of Outsiders to be well-nigh endless; and he is himself enabled to contrive some of the most patently absurd equivalences in the realm of historical interpretation that we are likely to encounter for a long time to come. Not only was Nijinsky an Outsider, but, it turns out, so too was Henry James: yes, Kafka was an Outsider, but so too was H. G. Wells (the Wells of *Mind at the End of Its Tether*): Dostoevsky was amongst their ranks, of course, but so too was Tolstoy: and Cardinal Newman, we are given to understand, "was fundamentally very like Nietzsche." But then we mustn't stop with the latter half of the nineteenth century, for there are earlier figures still to be reckoned with—William Blake, say, or, earlier still, the seventeenth-century Quaker, George Fox, and so on and on young Mr. Wilson goes with his solemn sort of fun. All these, and others, were Outsiders, for, in various ways, they were all people who, like Bergson's "mystic," attempted "to make a movement out of something which . . . [was] a halt": they all undertook in various times and places to resist the calcification of thought and the banalization of life that periodically threaten the human community: they were all types and examples of what Mr. Peter Viereck has lately called "the unadjusted man." But, if all these were Outsiders, one can hardly resist asking, then, the obvious question — namely, *who* were the Insiders? Well, Mr. Wilson is far too good a sport (or is it that he's only holding back for his next book?) to spoil what may be a diverting parlor game — but he does give us some slight hint of whom and what to look for in the suggestion that, since they were "all apparently normal and socially well adjusted," Dante, Shakespeare, and Keats may be taken as fine specimens of the Insider.

Now all this aims, finally, towards a conclusion which is itself more difficult to understand perhaps than anything that has gone before. Here, in the last chapter of his book which is called "Breaking the Circuit," Mr. Wilson concocts an utterly

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indigestible salad whose ingredients are the doctrines of T. E. Hulme and George Gurdjieff and George Bernard Shaw and the nineteenth-century Indian mystic Ramakrishna and still others whom I shall not enumerate. There is much talk of the Will, and of properly athleticizing it — and I can make very little of it at all: my guess is (though I cannot be certain) that it all boils down to something like the final passage in Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*:

To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;  
To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;  
To defy Power, which seems omnipotent;  
To love, and bear; to hope till Hope creates  
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;  
Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;  
This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be  
Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free;  
This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory.

Well, for the impecunious schoolmaster who must earn some of his books by doing reviews of them, to go through so rambling and aimless a chronicle as this is to pay a heavy price for the complimentary reviewer's copy: it is, indeed, the most infernally untidy book that I've tackled since reading some years ago Mr. Ezra Pound's *Guide to Kulchur*. But at least this much must be said, that this chap has run into some of the books which it is important that a young man in our time should have read — and he will, therefore, I think, bear watching over the next few years, the irritation of academicians and his own present immaturity notwithstanding.

Nathan A. Scott, Jr.

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## Reports and Notices

### REFLECTIONS ON THE DANFORTH SUMMER SEMINAR PROGRAM FOR COLLEGE FACULTY

What are the prerequisites for great college teaching? What is the place of moral and spiritual values in such teaching? How should Christian faith and Christian perspectives contribute to that teaching? These and other questions basic to higher education led the Danforth Foundation to initiate in 1952 a program of Summer Seminars for college faculty across the nation. The Seminars have been developed in cooperation with a number of universities and seminaries, with the Foundation providing the resources and the schools developing the programs. During these past five summers thirty Seminars have been attended by 707 college faculty who have spent from nine days to six weeks under the leadership of some 120 teachers in a wide range of disciplines. What have been some of the results of this program? What can these experiences teach us regarding the nature of authentic higher education and the intrinsic place of religious meanings and motivations in such education? These are questions to which I propose to address myself in this article, based upon the privilege of teaching in three of the Seminars and subsequent service on the staff of The Danforth Foundation, enabling me to listen in on fifteen of the Seminars. The following points will be covered:

1. A description of past Seminars and a summary of information, including evaluations returned to the Foundation by the participating faculty.
2. The purposes The Danforth Foundation had in mind in developing the Seminars.
3. Some personal evaluations.
4. The task ahead and hopes for the future.

#### *1. Description and summary of past Seminars*

The plan has been to make available to each sponsoring graduate school up to twenty-five room-board-tuition scholarships to be awarded to college faculty selected by the institution sponsoring the Seminar. Most of the Seminars during the first two years were open to teachers from all disciplines except religion. Since the projects were held in theological seminaries or graduate schools of religion, it was hoped that the program would provide those professors in fields other than religion with deeper insights into Christian foundations for teaching. Most of the leaders were seminary teachers in the fields of theology, Bible, ethics, philosophy, and counseling. Objectives were to provide a clear understanding of contemporary theology and religious thought, to explore religious perspectives for teaching one's special discipline, to quicken interest in problems of a philosophy of higher education, and to provide practical suggestions for relating religious perspectives to one's particular discipline.

During that first year, 1952, one Seminar, quite different from the others, was held. This one focused upon the problem of science and religion and was open only to professors in the fields of natural and physical sciences. Soon, the Foundation began to distinguish between a General Seminar, one open to teachers of all disciplines except religion, and a Special Seminar, one open to teachers within a limited field or discipline. Each type of



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## REPORTS AND NOTICES

project has proved to have significant values. The General Seminar encourages a wide range of interdisciplinary communication; the other invites a more rigorous inquiry into one segment of education. Both are free to explore basic moral and spiritual issues related to all of the fields or to the one discipline. General Seminars have been held at Union Theological Seminary, University of North Carolina, Garrett Biblical Institute, Perkins School of Theology of Southern Methodist University, School of Religion of the University of Southern California, Pacific School of Religion, and Boston University School of Theology. Special Seminars have been held at Pennsylvania State University, Yale University, Harvard School of Business Administration, Drew University, and the University of Oregon.

Space prohibits a listing of the distinguished leaders who have instructed in Seminars. Included in this group are over a score of the formative theological thinkers in the country, at least a dozen well-known philosophers, some half dozen strong scientists, and several able teachers in literature, business administration, and the social sciences. A significant value of the Seminars is this opportunity for undergraduate teachers to sit at the feet of thinkers who are moulding the religious and educational thought of our time within the intimacy of a small-group experience usually lasting for at least two weeks.

Some interesting 1956 statistics are available regarding the types of colleges in which the teachers are serving who attended the eight Seminars held this past summer. Of these 199 participants,

132 cooperated by returning a written evaluation form assessing their experience. Sixty-eight of these 132 teachers are serving in denominational and small state schools having less than 1500 students, 23 are in middle sized schools, 39 in large universities, and 2 in large technical institutions. It is of further interest to note that 354 professors applied for the opportunity to attend the eight Seminars held this past summer, with scholarships available for 200. This is the largest number yet to apply and represents a growing interest in the Seminars on the part of faculty.

The Foundation has available a measurable summary of evaluations sent in by teachers during the four summers. This portion of the evaluation comprises a check list where the teacher may give his reaction to several statements under such grading as "Excellent," "Good," "Fair," "Poor." Below are cited four of these topics and the ratings covering the 1953-56 period:

	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>
1. Your rating of the Seminar in enlarging your philosophical and theological over-view.	235	75	29	5
2. In quickening your interest in problems of a philosophy of higher education.	212	90	19	4
3. In providing aid in the study of religious perspectives for teaching your special discipline.	123	121	58	12
4. In offering practical suggestions for the use of religious perspectives in your classroom teaching.	81	114	86	30

This data suggests that the Seminars have been unusually successful in deepening religious thought and in awakening interest in problems of higher education. Aid has been provided for examining religious perspectives although a significant portion of the teachers thought they did not gain much practical assistance in applying these perspectives to their particular disciplines. Increasingly, it is recognized that this matter of practical help is not easily solved. Some teachers may be wanting concrete suggestions which would seem to be a waste of time to others. It is obvious that further exploration can be made in this aspect of the program.

## 2. *Purposes The Foundation Had in Mind in Developing the Summer Seminar Program*

This Seminar program came into being at a time when there was rapidly spreading interest in these broad issues of higher education. Administrators and faculty across the nation were re-examining curricula to learn whether religion as a discipline was adequately represented, professors and chaplains of religion were being added to college faculty, faculty groups were meeting to examine this matter of religious perspectives in all fields and to inquire regarding their own theologies and ultimate world views. The Foundation then believed that a summer program designed to enable college teachers to sit a few weeks under some of the ablest religious thinkers would strengthen this movement and make it more responsible in terms of rigorous educational standards. The results have, on the whole, abundantly fulfilled these expectations and hopes.

During the past five years certain changes have developed in the academic atmosphere. The general mood of educators is now one which is more willing to give religion a serious "hearing" in our colleges and universities. There is a growing awareness that the central task is no longer primarily that of merely emphasizing religion on the campus. There is increasing recognition that frontier thinking needs to be done on ascertaining the place of religious values and meanings which belong intrinsically in authentic higher education. This is no major shift of concern, but it is leading to a greater focus upon the inherent nature of sound education and is less content to "tack religion on" to a curriculum or to "inject" it into a discipline. It is, therefore, the hope of the Foundation that the Seminars may continue to fulfill significant religious functions and, at the same time, may push further into critical issues of higher education.

## 3. *Some Personal Evaluations*

The Seminars have focused the attention of teachers upon presuppositions and "world views" underlying their lives and their teachings. "Unexamined assumptions of objectivity" have been exhaustively treated. Certain of the leaders have analyzed these basic assumptions in terms of implicit interpretations of man, history, and the cosmos. Professor Arnold Nash has been especially concerned with the problem. Such interpretations, when adhered to with any degree of ultimate loyalty, have sometimes been characterized as religion. Thus every professor is described as religious regardless of whether his devotion is to

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human values, the American way of life, or a traditional deity. There has also been criticism of such an approval: chiefly the claim that such a method does violence to the full meaning of religion.

Quite apart from the debate over terms, this focus upon presuppositions has had salutary effects. Teachers have been led to examine the foundations of their own positions and to trace influences and biases flowing out into all areas of their thought and teaching. More sophisticated and valid meanings for objectivity and neutrality have emerged. And the same searchlight which they have turned upon themselves has also been trained upon others. Colleagues, writers, and textbooks have been scrutinized in order to ascertain where "presuppositions are showing." Since the majority of those in the seminars, both leaders and participants, have been Christian, strong attacks upon so-called "objective" and "scientific" authors have been made especially in the fields of history, literature and social science. It has been charged that these writers have introduced anti-religious perspectives which, under a guise of neutrality, have done violence to both subject matter and to interpretations.

When one has had the privilege to listen in on many of these sessions were able thinkers are digging into underlying presuppositions he cannot but be impressed with the results. Unquestionably the discussions have moved to profounder levels. Basic faiths have been clarified. Men discern more clearly where they and their opponents stand. Yet I find myself, after five summers of par-

ticipation in such Seminars, plagued with growing misgivings. In these sessions where Christian leaders and mostly Christian participants examine the faiths of themselves and of others, are the victories liable to be too bloodless and sweeping? Is the opposition, apparently vanquished within these congenial gatherings, liable to reappear with even fresh vitality on the secular campus? If my misgivings have the slightest grounding in reality, it is time that we re-examine thoroughly and critically this entire summer Seminar program. What are the educational presuppositions underlying this inquiry by religiously motivated teachers?

The following would seem to summarize the basic assumption of many of the leaders and participants in these Seminars: Our Christian approach to higher education is sounder than purely classical, naturalistic, liberal, and other philosophies of education because our position, along with other values, provides us with a more authentic and fruitful understanding of man and of history. It has indeed been inspiring to hear the able interpretations of the total human situation which have come from thinkers starting with the above presupposition, especially since I agree with that assumption.

But what of the educational presupposition that like-minded people can be the best critics of their own positions and can do full justice to their opponents? As this question has forced itself increasingly into my attention, several related thoughts have sharpened its pertinence. There is, for instance, in much of our

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current discussion regarding a "Christian" college a warning that even there the faculty should not represent identical positions. There is, further, the recognition that within our finite limitations any attempt to enthrone one dominant philosophy of education, even a Christian one, cannot but end in idolatry where partial human truths are exalted into final Truth. Tillich, Herberg, and others have carefully elaborated these dangers. In light of such admonitions the question must be raised: Are these Seminars educationally valid?

The pendulum of evaluation cannot, however, halt at this point. It must be recognized that these Seminars make no claim to constituting a total philosophy of education. They embrace only a few weeks, only a tiny segment of the energy, time, and thought of those involved and propose to deal with only limited aspects of the full educational task. They have been conceived as filling an educational gap, not as constituting an educational system. How frequently we hear laments concerning the religious illiteracy of professors and students and pleas for greater interdisciplinary communication where moral and spiritual issues can be intelligently treated. Only recently I heard one of our able scientists state that all too often scientists and professors of religion attempt to relate science and religion without adequate understanding of the distinctive contents and methods of either. There is also a growing awareness among all educators, eloquently voiced in the Harvard Report, that students must be led to examine ultimate values seriously and to commit themselves to certain of those values. It is conscious-

ness of such needs as these which has brought the Seminars into being. Yet this side of the pendulum swing does not eliminate earlier mentioned objections. We are still confronted with the disturbing question: Can like-minded people be the best critics of their own positions and do full justice to their opponents? More specifically, can the needed level of critical encounter be attained when leaders do not represent a wide range of contending educational philosophies?

It is my final conclusion that the answer to the above questions is "yes." The theory underlying the Seminars as now constituted is educationally sound if Christian leaders *recognize certain educational presuppositions* essential to their own religious role in higher education. It is beneficial, not hazardous, for higher education if summer Seminars are designed to realize such objectives as *increasing religious literacy and sharpening interdisciplinary communication* where ultimate values and religious concepts are concerned. These are gaps which need to be filled *for the sake of sound education*. But this strengthening of education by Seminars working primarily in areas of value and religion will occur only if careful attention is paid to the all-important matter of *educational prerequisites*.

Let us recall the basic religious assumption underlying the approach of many of the leaders of the Seminars: A Christian approach to higher education is sounder than purely classical, naturalistic, and other philosophies of education because the Christian position provides a more authentic and fruitful understand-



ing of man and of history. Now we are asking: What are some of the *educational* presuppositions implicit whenever this assumption is held by *Christian* teachers? This question can be put in terms of an analogous vocational situation. Let us shift our attention from a Christian teacher to a Christian physician. Immediately we must ask: What medical presuppositions are required if this religiously motivated doctor is to fulfill his unique vocational functions? Obviously there are vocational requirements of a physician which are quite different from the vocational requirements of, say, a housewife or a plumber. To be a good doctor requires definite assumptions about physiology, psychology, and a long discipline of training. Certainly there are points where the Christian physician will assert interpretations regarding his patient and his work because of his religious faith. But these religious assumptions must always rest upon professional medical presuppositions. Even so, the Christian teacher must recognize clearly at least *three* educational presuppositions which stem *per se* from his vocation of teaching.

*First: The Christian must be aware that his ultimate reliance upon revelation for his foundational Truth raises serious difficulties for the entire educational process.* He should presuppose this difficulty. Indeed, he may well concede as did St. Paul, that, when first viewed from the vantage point of education, his Christian claim is "foolishness." Here it is important to distinguish clearly the particularly unique position which Christians represent in this realm of higher education. Classical, natural, and

liberal philosophies of education rest upon the assumption that man can learn the essential meanings of life by developing his own resources — by critical inquiry and experimentation, and, some would add, by further powers of intuitive insight. At many stages of the learning process, the Christian, to be sure, must remain entirely within these natural processes if he is educationally responsible. At one stage, however, he becomes radically different. He affirms unique knowledge of man's nature and of history, not from any wisdom he has had the ability to acquire but from Truth revealed to him by God. Thus he is claiming a special source of wisdom upon which others have refused or have been unable to draw. He then goes on to insist that his special wisdom, received through faith, provides clues to the comprehension of otherwise baffling enigmas encountered in concrete human nature and history. He claims possession of a map with cryptic readings, known only to himself, which interpret a system of otherwise confusing roadways.

The key point is that the Christian must acknowledge the problem his approach constitutes for other philosophies of higher education. Until others are around where he is, interpreting mankind's journey on the basis of his map, he cannot expect them to concur with him. Their presuppositions, limited to their intuitive hunches, postulated assumptions, logical conclusions, or empirical generalizations are different in kind from his faith presuppositions. All of this should add up to the Christian's realization that he cannot constrain

others by some quality of superior argument to accept his philosophy of education. Indeed, this means that the Christian will not even assume that he and representatives of other educational positions are at the outset in a common universe of discourse when human nature and history are being considered.

Once the Christian is fully aware of these barriers, he will do everything possible to initiate methods of communication which will enable him and the others to recognize their different universes, then to construct a larger overarching framework for mutually enriching discourse. Following are some of the steps by which the Christian can endeavor to initiate work toward this larger goal.

(1) The Christian can testify personally to the power of his faith to produce a meaningful and purposive orientation of his own life amidst the psychological and historical ambiguities of existence. This personal witness is of key, indeed, of ultimately crucial importance in any larger discourse between Christians and other educators. But its importance must not be overrated or distorted. By itself, it is only one of many profound religious witnesses continually being made to educators. Aware of this, the Christian will be eager to propose further means for developing a larger universe of discourse.

(2) The Christian should concede that while from his own perspective, his faith-claims are revealed Truth, not dependent upon further confirmation in experience, from the perspective of other educators Christian affirmations are but another postulated set of assump-

tions. It is this concession which can bring the Christian into meaningful discourse with all educators. He must allow his firmly held conviction that God has declared to man final Truth concerning human experience and history to be treated in the total arena of educational philosophy as a tentative hypothesis. And, let it be emphasized, this is no mere gesture done condescendingly for the sake of "making conversation." It is no mere gesture, because the Christian is a man of doubt as well as a man of faith. He is always hungering for tangible evidence that God's revealed Word is confirmable as True. It is no mere gesture, also, because the Christian in his zeal to win others to his position is particularly sensitive to their lack of a revealed map by which to interpret reality as he sees it. He is thus eager to provide every possible clue which can help convince them. It is no mere gesture, finally, because the Christian holds that the God who has revealed Truth is also the Creator, the author of the basic structures of man and of history. While empirical knowledge of created existence does not provide knowledge of the Creator, it is the Christian's confidence (at least, of those who appreciate any form of "logos" theology) that rigorous study of existence will corroborate his Truth gained through faith.

(3) Once the Christian grants that other educators can but treat his faith-claims as another postulate or hypothesis to be subjected to every possible empirical test, he will be eager to work out with them agreed upon procedures for such confirmation. Following are important contributions which he, from his Chris-

tian perspective, can submit. He can concede, firstly, that his faith that ultimate reality is the Creator of heaven and earth, the Lord of history, and the Saviour of persons is, to normal ways of thinking, preposterous, indeed, ridiculous. This revealed Truth sounds to man's careful and critical judgment simply "too good to be true." Nowhere, outside of the tradition of biblical revelation, has man conceived any such notion of deity. The obvious data of nature and experience do not seem to support any such "good news." All of this, and more, the Christian should concede at the outset. Only through this approach can he do justice to the gospel he proclaims and to the critical reaction to such a gospel which man has every right to make. The Christian can acknowledge, secondly, that there are hazardous tendencies toward distortion and perversion interwoven with the creative dynamics of his religion. This ambivalence is something which must be faced, not ignored. It should not be left to psychiatrists to point out that often Christian trust can result in an unhealthy passivity on the part of persons who need to assert greater ego effort. It should not be left to critics of the Church to decry the cultural irresponsibility of certain Christian groups with their eschatological confidence that Christ has already completed his transcendent victory over history and nature. On we could go. The important thing is for the Christian to be the first to detect and disown all warping of religious, cultural, and personal values. The Christian can take the initiative, thirdly, to join with all educators in working out specific methodologies to

secure the greatest possible empirical testing of his faith-claims. This goes back to a point mentioned earlier: Confidence that the Revealer of Christian Truth is also the Creator of the structures of human nature and of history. This means that the more man can learn about essential human experience, personal and corporate, the more he will be confirming the faith-claims of biblical religion concerning man and history. This joint effort will call for Christians to move wholeheartedly into all of the behavioral and historical sciences, aiding in the work of delineating the nature, functioning and results of such scientific endeavors. The first part of this total undertaking is to devise increasingly productive theories or "models" concerning man's concrete individual and corporate activities and needs.

From time to time the Christian has every right to insist that his faith-claims provide insights which deserve incorporation into these theoretical formulations. All of this preliminary task of "model" building must then issue into exacting and unrelenting processes of empirical testing. At this stage, there are certain key questions: What are the results obtained from personal and corporate experience? Which theories explain more of the evidence? Which promise more accurate predictive powers? At this stage all educational philosophies will be measured by empirical results, not by the skillful arguments of the respective apologists. To whatever degree Christianity is today gaining a more serious hearing among educators, this is precisely because such theologians as Tillich and Niebuhr have been able, through

their methods of correlation, to give sound empirical interpretations of contemporary man and history. But, again, this stage of testing by actual results confronts Christianity with a critical problem. For the Christian must concede that the final "fruit" or validation of his interpretation of man and history rest upon the actual life and work of the visible Church. Once Christianity claims to be a cultural force in history, it is to be measured finally not by what it can do for individuals but by what its institutions can do amidst the cultural forces of modernity.

Consequently, *the second presupposition* which the Christian should hold as he works in higher education is the following: *Christians encounter serious historical difficulties in translating their religious commitments and theological formulations into historical institutions.* There is real danger that Christian thinkers working within the isolated intellectual setting of academic Seminars will neglect these stubborn problems. Certainly it has been farthest from the intention of leaders in the Seminars to ignore or minimize these difficulties. Yet the peril is there precisely because the academic mind lives and moves and has its being in a world radically different from the one in which non-academic churchmen grapple with religious issues. This judgment can be confirmed by contrasting almost any typical theological discussion between college professors with a typical theological discussion participated in by clergymen responsible for the institutional life of the Church. If the problem is salvation, the professors are more liable to picture the lostness of

man in terms of contemporary psychological and existential insights with only brief elaboration of how God's redemptive love in Christ can restore the sinner to wholeness and with little attempt to examine critical issues centering around claims for Christ's radically unique role in saving men; the clergymen are more liable to pass rather quickly from the condition of man into the subtleties of Christ's atoning work through His death on the Cross. If the issue centers around the sacraments, the former are more liable to delve into the meanings of symbols and expressive communication in connection with man's total needs; the latter are more liable to find themselves confronted with knotty questions concerning intercommunion and ordination.

The above suggests that there is need for more careful delineation of what may be termed "amateur" and "professional" theology. Let us regard the theological treatment which is achieved by laymen in these faculty seminars as "amateur," and that prevailing among more carefully trained churchmen as "professional." The critical task in Protestantism is to distinguish more clearly the essential quality of "amateur" theology which is to be expected of lay faculty members. One thoughtful Christian teacher, active in the Faculty Christian Fellowship, calls for "an extensive acquaintance with the full reaches of Christian doctrine" without "narrow and individualistic fragmentation of that doctrine into cheap, sterilized and self-righteous packages." (Roland M. Frye in *The Christian Scholar*, September, 1956, p. 183). Yet this virile challenge serves only to accen-

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tuates difficulties in drawing the amateur-professional line. Even when time and energy can be found to provide laymen with an "extensive acquaintance" with the subtle complexities of the trinity, soteriology, eschatology, and the rest, there is no assurance that the results will resolve intellectual confusions and enhance faith. Indeed, it must be acknowledged that "extensive acquaintance" with theological issues by highly trained churchmen themselves has often served not to produce harmony but to sharpen highly sophisticated differences. In spite of these hazards Mr. Frye is on sound ground when he calls for more serious work in theology by faculty laymen. The point here being made is that this is no easy task; it dare not gloss over serious difficulties in Christian doctrine and particularly in Christian institutions. There cannot be ultimately one theology for academic Seminars, another for Church councils.

All of this suggests that there is need for a procedure and a spirit which will enable a seminar for educators to venture constructively into this hazardous zone between amateur and professional theology. Here I can but share my opinion regarding certain approaches which will be fruitful. One: The leaders and at least some of the participants should become deeply involved personally in the issues being treated. This mood of life-and-death concern will make evident why the weaknesses as well as the strengths of the Christian tradition are being ruthlessly examined. One who commits his very life and destiny through faith to the Christian view is precisely the one who has the urgency and the authorization to

scrutinize sharply every aspect of that view. Two: Clarification should be attempted regarding the meaning of theological language. What claims are made for these abstractions in terms of truth, validity, analogy, and illustration? When are they regarded as signs, when as symbols; when denotive, when connotive? When are they intending to suggest, when to define? When are they "demythologizing" and when are they pushing on to a deeper use of myth? Surely there is increasing need for joint work by professionals and amateurs on such questions as these. Three: A responsible amateurism can equip itself to contribute significant criticism of systematic theology and institutional Christianity without calling into question the essential worth of such theology and institutionalism. A key to responsible criticism by laymen is recognition of four different functions which theological thinking fulfills: explication of and justification for a believer's commitment; treatment of subtle complexities in the doctrinal system by competent "professionals" who understand why and how such complex issues become ultimately crucial to the central pillars of the faith itself; elaboration of basic affirmations needed in any evangelical proclamation of the faith; provision for the total system of ideas, theological, organizational, artistic, sociological, etc., required for Christianity to be an on-going historical Church. Faculty laymen obviously will not equip themselves in brief summer seminars to become experts for the technical debates entailed in the second task, although they can gain a larger appreciation of why such involved theological efforts are



required. Lay faculty members can, on the other hand, contribute significantly to all three of the other functions. These are the operations where theology must move into life. It is here that amateurs are precisely the ones who can point out to professionals where this infusion is failing to take place and to share their best judgments why. Who better than theologically alerted economists and business school teachers can detect why Christian claims are too often ignored in the market place and office? Who better than sociologists can see why certain affirmations of orthodoxy seems so irrelevant to modern marital problems? Enough has been written to provide ground for the hope that further lay training can eventuate in new levels of communication regarding issues of doctrinal and institutional Christianity.

*A third educational presupposition fundamental to the Christian faith presupposition being considered is the need to elaborate clearly the nature of the Christian or "biblical" philosophy of education and to compare it critically with naturalistic, classical, liberal, or any other important educational philosophies.* Significant starts in this direction have been achieved in the Seminars. The fact that such a large number of participants returning evaluations reported a quickened interest in problems of a philosophy of higher education speaks to this achievement. Dean Merriman Canningin has focused serious attention upon such questions as: What is education? What are the desired results? How much of the students' and of the teachers' life is involved? What ought to be taught? Is there a central core in the

curriculum? What is the responsibility of the college for its society? But Christian leaders would be first to admit that there yet remains much work to be done in determining the extent to which a Christian or biblical philosophy of education, outside the Thomistic framework, can be formulated. Thus comparisons are still confusing, inconclusive, and possibly out of order.

One essential requirement for a serious comparison by Christians of their own with non-Christian educational philosophies is carefulness in treating the very strongest points in these other positions. This is one of those self-evident assumptions basic to all sound education. Fortunately, Christian leaders in the Seminars have been of the calibre who are eager to base their teaching on this crucially important principle. They have not been guilty of errors of commission. But surely these leaders will join me in acknowledging that wherever leadership stands within the same position, there is always the danger of errors of omission. Thus, there is the hazard that in these Seminars opposing philosophies may not be represented at their points of greatest strength simply because the leaders may not sense the imperative need for acquainting participants with the strongest elements in those philosophies.

One hears in the Seminars, to cite one example, rather frequent mention of John Dewey and Deweyism in connection with discussion of naturalistic approaches to education. Occasionally a leader will have opportunity to elaborate a careful critique of the Dewey position.

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At other times this entire approach will be dismissed with a few passing criticisms. Even the careful critiques may not examine the strongest contributions of neo-Deweyism, such as the revisions of Stanley culminating in his "method of practical judgment" (W. O. Stanley, *Education and Social Integration*) and the work of Kenneth Benne on "validating preferences" within the "validating community." Seldom has debate within the Seminars on this issue of naturalism reached the level achieved in Peter Bertocci's review of John L. Child's *Education and Morals* in the *Harvard Educational Review*, Fall, 1951. These limitations exist, let it be repeated, not because the religious leaders of the Seminars are narrow, dogmatic, or indifferent to the need for critical inquiry. Such limitations can drive all of us to a greater awareness of the problem of achieving a thoroughly critical comparison, especially whenever leadership for any educational venture functions within positions of basic agreement.

Let us now review the thesis being developed. It is educationally sound to design summer Seminars for the specific purpose of strengthening the moral and religious aspects of authentic higher education. It is, further, educationally sound to select the great majority of leaders for the Seminars because of their Christian commitment. When this is done, these religious leaders need to have an explicit awareness of their basic Christian presupposition regarding education and of the *educational presuppositions inherent in this Christian presupposition*. It has been suggested that most of the Christian leaders presuppose that

their approach to higher education is sounder than contending positions because this approach provides a more authentic and fruitful understanding of man and of history. But once this Christian presupposition is held, three implicit educational presuppositions in this Christian assumption need to be made explicit if the Seminar is to be educationally sound: (1) Acknowledgment by Christians that their revelational claims to Truth constitute unique difficulties for educational methods; (2) Confession of stubborn problems encountered in the effort to translate personal commitment and theological formulations into historical activity and institutions; (3) Need for a thoroughly critical comparison between contending educational philosophies with diligent care to see that the strongest points in each opposing position are confronted.

Religious leaders motivated by such Christian and educational presuppositions will be in position to make increasingly valuable contributions to higher education. Surely this is a frontier task which will require close teamwork between these leaders. Theological members of the team will need to delineate Christian truth in both its unique religious dimensions and in its positive and negative educational significances. Educational members of the team — to use a designation all too ambiguous — will need to ferret out strengths and weaknesses in each educational position, Christian and non-Christian. All members will need to ascertain those points at which the Christian and the educational undertaking are mutually supportive and the points at which these under-

takings can be joined only by doing violence to one or to the other.

#### 4. *The Task Ahead*

The Danforth Summer Seminars can become increasingly a responsible and constructive force in American higher education. The leaders of these projects are men and women who have the capacities to push forward into new educational frontiers. The Foundation is encouraging directors of the Seminars to do everything possible to draw leaders and participants into a creative group experience, which will combine elements of an intellectual Seminar, a practical workshop, and a recreative small-group experience. Increasingly, it is realized that the Seminars fall short of their possibilities if they comprise merely two or three traditional summer school courses. I became especially aware of these greater potentialities last summer while visiting one of the Seminars where the participants represented conflicting religious traditions and philosophic positions. The lectures of the leaders and papers by the participants expounded a wide range of opposing viewpoints. Yet during the days together, a depth of mutual respect and appreciation was achieved which culminated in a quality of intellectual humility and spiritual communication transcending anything commonly experienced in learned society gatherings. The distinctive element was a *spirit* in which individuals were acknowledging serious problems in their positions even while affirming values sufficient to claim their allegiance.

The task ahead is to bring into being more of these experiences where thoughtful, earnest, informed teachers can grapple with themselves, with each other, with higher educational philosophies, and with ultimate religious viewpoints and commitments, all within an atmosphere of friendly camaraderie and critical concern. To further this task, the Foundation is submitting the following purposes for these summer programs:

To encourage inter-disciplinary communication between faculty representing a wide range of fields, especially in General Seminars.

To encourage communication between leaders with religious interests and outstanding competence in a special discipline and college teachers in that discipline, especially in Special Seminars.

To examine thoroughly and critically basic meanings and problems of the Christian world view, especially as those meanings and problems bear upon higher education.

To search out ultimate spiritual values and perspectives which belong intrinsically in every sound classroom experience.

To focus the above objectives into a critical evaluation of current philosophies of higher education.

To revitalize the teacher's appreciation for his vocational opportunities in creative teaching, scholarship, and research.

Prentiss Pemberton  
Associate Director  
The Danforth Foundation

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### DENOMINATIONAL EMPHASES ON CHRISTIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

During the past several months a number of church-wide emphases on the Christian responsibilities in higher education came to our attention. It appeared that there were enough of the churches engaged in this to summarize the major activities currently under way. However, it should be remembered that there are a number of the larger churches which do not proceed on the basis of special emphases; thus their absence here should not suggest that no major work is currently being done by them. Moreover, a number of the other churches have not responded to our letter of inquiry. This is presented, therefore, as an indication of how some churches are currently engaged in denomination-wide special emphases on higher education.

The Division of Christian Higher Education of the American Baptist Convention is using nineteen regional conferences to secure the reaction of its constituency to a proposal, the details of which are tentative at present, for a major financial campaign for its inclusive responsibilities in higher education. The areas included are theological seminaries, schools, colleges and universities, other specialized Christian training centers, scholarship and student aid, the work of university pastors and student centers — in North America, Latin America, and areas for which the Foreign Mission Societies are responsible. Discussion by the Convention as a whole will take place on May 31 with action expected on June 1; but the area conferences have already responded favorably to the proposed program.

The Church of the Brethren's General Brotherhood Board reports that its six colleges are carrying on their programs in each of their areas with the national body giving its approval to a plan for greatly increased financial support of the colleges, by the board, as a part of an advance program for the Church to be launched in 1958. This major program is expected to be named the Anniversary Call, celebrating the 250th Anniversary of the founding of the Church of the Brethren.

The Church of God (Anderson, Indiana) is currently preparing plans for a permanent commission on higher education through which the program of the church in this area will be coordinated; it is expected that its establishment, and a definition of its powers and responsibilities, will take place in June 1957. In one of its colleges, Anderson College, a thoroughgoing five-year study is being made which includes all areas of the institution; sub-committees, including faculty, trustees, and others, are actively undertaking this long range study.

The Seventh Day Baptist Church has three related colleges, each of which is responsible entirely for its own work. Each Board of Directors provides articles for denominational publications, prepares promotional materials, and sponsors college days in the local congregations with surprisingly good results: one congregation gives an average of ten dollars per members to support a college. There is now a special committee of the General Conference to study the needs of their institutions of higher education for future action.

The Division of Higher Education and the American Missionary Association of the Congregational and Christian Churches is exploring the possibility of a denomination-wide Biennial Emphasis on Higher Education in 1958-1960. The program will be inclusive of all interests in the fields of higher education both at home and abroad.

In the higher education program sponsored by the Board of Home Missions aid to educational institutions and support of the campus ministry are both included and are regarded as having equal importance. "Higher education" as understood by the American Board of Commissions for Foreign Missions may not in every instance be at the collegiate level but is the "highest" education available in fields where the Board is at work. Urgently needed support of higher education will include both capital funds and increased income aid to ongoing programs. The campaign for support of Christian higher education will presumably be the last major financial effort undertaken by this denomination apart from the coming union with the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Estimated needs of Congregational-Christian colleges in America and overseas and of the Campus Ministry in terms of buildings, endowments, and program ran in the tens of millions of dollars. Added to this were estimates from theological seminaries. In order to raise this tremendous sum concurrent campaigns will be carried on by colleges, seminaries, and Boards seeking the aid of churches, individuals, foundations, college and seminary constituencies, etc.

The Board of Higher Education of the Disciples of Christ reports that the estimated needs of the institutions which are members of the Board will total above one hundred and fifty million dollars which will provide for, among other things, an increase in capacity for students of somewhere between twenty-five and thirty per cent. This general goal includes only the liberal arts colleges, junior colleges, and seminaries but does not include new resources necessary for the expansion of other types of higher educational experience to be projected over the next decade.

It is not anticipated that all of these resources will be derived from Disciple sources. The development program is not on a nation wide basis but will be conducted by each individual institution within the geographical area which it serves.

The Department of Christian Education of the Evangelical Lutheran Church is engaged in a program which includes expansion, curriculum study, and long-range development of its theological seminaries. Its five senior colleges are involved in development programs which include campus improvement, faculty improvement, and a re-examination of curriculum and program. To improve faculty salaries the church is adding to its regular contributions to the schools and colleges for 1957 and 1958 an amount roughly equivalent to the earnings on the funds received recently from the Ford Foundation. In addition there are two church-wide programs designed to encourage interest in and attendance



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at its colleges; one of these is a scholarship fund and the other is an alumni support program. In the contemplated merger of this church with two other bodies, the American Lutheran Church and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, opportunity would be given to develop an inclusive program for additional schools, colleges, and seminaries.

The Evangelical United Brethren Church is midway in a quadrennium campaign for enlarged support of higher education through a national program in which local congregations contribute directly by solicitation or special offerings. This program includes both the church's seminaries and its colleges; its objective is an increase of \$500,000 for each institution's capital funds. One of the colleges has enlisted its constituency in a campaign for \$1.00 per church member per year for current expenses; this goal has been achieved now for about three years, bringing the institution about \$90,000 annually. Moreover, the church's laymen's organization assumes responsibility for the promotion of National Christian College Day in every local church, bringing improved relations between the constituency and the institutions of higher education.

The Commission on Christian Higher Education of the Methodist Church is giving special emphasis to its responsibilities during this General Conference quadrennium. The 118 institutions of higher learning related to the Methodist Board of Education, the 162 Wesley Foundations at state and independent college and university campuses, and the 245 other units of the Methodist Student Movement are involved in the special

emphasis. This does not include a national fund raising drive since capital funds campaigns are the responsibilities of the annual conferences, and these in turn have been requested to study their own institutions and their needs. However, the Commission on behalf of the entire church will use all good means of communication on a nationwide basis to promote Methodists' sense of responsibility in higher education. Additional publications, bulletins, brochures, and study books are being used and a motion picture on the church-related college has been released. These will be used, in conjunction with a special handbook issue of *Church and Campus*, to undertake a serious task of interpretation on behalf of the church in higher education, to build understanding and respect for Christian higher education, to combat the anti-intellectualism which periodically affects American culture, and to indicate the wide responsibility of the Church in providing training for its future leaders.

The Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. over the past five year period has multiplied nearly four times its national appropriation to its colleges, the total now being over one million dollars. Encouragement toward raising faculty salaries is given nationally by an allocated faculty salary challenge fund to be matched by the colleges. The current appropriation also includes a scholarship program now in its second year for Presbyterian, U.S.A., students attending Presbyterian colleges. Public relations counsel has been provided to help the colleges in an overall public relations program, and there is additional

advertising intended to help the colleges directly. Through its Department of Campus Christian Life, the church carries out an extensive campus ministry at state and private universities throughout the country; over one hundred twenty student centers are officially related to the DCCL. Within the next year, the policy toward which the church is currently working will make appropriations available to Westminster Foundations in amounts equivalent to the full salary and nine per cent pension premium for each professional staff member, the general guide being that there shall be more than one such staff person for each situation in which the total number of Presbyterian-preference students exceeds one thousand.

For the past year the Presbyterian Church, U.S., through its Division of Higher Education, has been engaged in a special emphasis upon the church's responsibility to higher education. Campaigns are now under way or being planned which will add more than thirty million dollars to this church's general assets in colleges and universities. In the past six years its contributions to the annual operating expenses of these institutions has more than doubled. Their Faculty Fellowship and more than 185 Westminster Fellowships have ministered to Presbyterian faculty and students, and nine Special Guidance Centers have given vocational guidance to youth concerning their future study and work. Much effort has been expended to help local congregations become conscious of their responsibilities to the cause of Christian Higher Education and to the ministry of the Church to the campus.

Since 1954 the Southern Baptist Convention has had an annual Convention-wide emphasis on Christian higher education. During the past three years this was promoted by 44,025,000 pages or copy in periodicals of denominational agencies, 18,850,000 pages in state Baptist papers, and distribution of 2,211,020 tracts, leaflets, and posters. This promotion is intended eventually to familiarize every Southern Baptist with the basic purposes and ideals of the Christian college. Though not pointed primarily at financial support, it serves to establish a foundation of interest and conviction from which adequate support can be derived.

No special financial effort in behalf of Southern Baptist colleges is in progress or contemplated. There is a definite trend away from fund-raising campaigns as such and toward provision for the needs of the colleges in the annual budgets of state conventions. Of the sixteen state Baptist conventions with colleges in 1956 only two failed to include appropriations for capital needs, and support of the thirty senior colleges and twenty-one junior colleges through budgeted appropriations of state conventions has increased by two-and-a-half times since 1950. Much of this results from the work of the Education Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, one of whose purposes has been to influence both the colleges and their constituencies toward effective working relationships resulting in improved service, better stewardship, and enlarged opportunity. This long-range work bids fair to surpass anything that could be accomplished by "special" efforts.

## REPORTS AND NOTICES

The Protestant Episcopal Church has devoted increasing resources to its work in the colleges and universities of the country. This church has never sought to create or maintain many church colleges. There are now six four-year colleges that have a formal relationship with the Episcopal Church, and only two of these receive continuing financial support from National Church sources. In recent years increasing emphasis has been given to the task of expanding and deepening the ministry and work of the church within all sorts and kinds of colleges and universities. National support for such work has doubled in the past four years, and there are plans for its continuing expansion.

In addition to the many activities mentioned in regard to specific denominations it should be noted that most of them have long standing scholarship programs to help outstanding Christian students continue their education in the

best graduate schools of the nation. Some denominations have placement bureaus to assist their own students find teaching appointments. Conferences are held for students, faculty, chaplains, heads of departments, deans, and administrative officials of their colleges and universities. Magazines and books are prepared especially to serve the needs of the various persons who make up the Church college or university.

On the whole we must rejoice that these denominations are recognizing the responsibilities of the Church of Christ to higher education. The vast resources of time, money, and personnel which are going into this work is staggering. To summarize the importance of it all we might use the words of Dr. Hunter B. Blakely of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.: "Christian Higher Education is the Church's effort to claim for Christ the intellectual leadership of tomorrow. . . . Whoever captures the campus today will control the civilization of tomorrow."

### AN AMERICAN REPORT ON A BRITISH CONFERENCE

*Dr. Seymour A. Smith who sends this report is Associate Professor of Religion in Higher Education at Yale University Divinity School and has been on a leave-of-absence during the academic year 1956-57, a part of his time having been given to the study of educational issues in England.*

Continuing a tradition now well established since the war, British university teachers met again this spring for a five-day "Don's Conference", March 28—April 2, at University College of North Staffordshire in the rolling countryside of the English midlands.

The conference, sponsored again by a university teachers' group associated with the British SCM and the Christian Frontier Council, centered on the social sciences and the Christian faith—an area in which conference planners declared "the tension between religion and science is perhaps at its height." Compared to previous gatherings, this Don's Conference was small—about fifty participants. Of these, roughly half were social scientists (mostly sociologists and economists) and the remainder were theologians or representatives of other disciplines.

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Leadership for the conference was recruited from among well known British social scientists and religious leaders, including T. S. Simey, D. L. Munby, Sir Geoffrey Vickers, D. Chapman and Canon V. A. Demant — and from both sides of the Atlantic, Norman Birnbaum and Arnold Nash. All sessions were under the chairmanship of Dr. Kathleen Bliss, prominent British representative in the World Council of Churches, and Daniel Jenkins served as Conference Chaplain.

The Conference structure was designed to provide opportunity for maximum expression of conflict on such issues as the aims of the social sciences, the nature of man as seen from differing perspectives, the assumptions and methods of the social sciences, the appropriate uses of new knowledge in building a better society, and the like. Sharply opposing views at fundamental levels, however, did not in fact appear with great frequency. This was not due to lack of concern or insight nor to any reticence in debate and discussion — at which British intellectuals are unsurpassed experts. Rather the general sense of harmony reflected the essential Christian orientation of most participants and the absence of extremists antipathetic to Christian claims. The Conference, then, took on the character of a reasonable family discussion — with differing opinions and emphases and some attention to the “enemy” outside, but all looked at from within the family.

There was yet another significant factor determining the nature of the

discussions: the claims being made for the social sciences were extremely modest. There were no brash assertions regarding “the bright new day” to be ushered in when enough pounds (or dollars) and man hours had been spent on social research, no assumption that increased social knowledge will solve the problem of moral decision or provide the ultimate understanding of the nature of man. The aims of the social sciences tended to be put in guarded terms of “contributing to human freedom by heightening critical self awareness” or “prediction in terms of trends and probabilities”. In sociology, especially, there was a disposition to be content with limiting the spheres of investigation to compassable units where empirical methods could be employed readily, and to look with skepticism and disfavor upon attempts at all-inclusive system-building. And in all social sciences there was acknowledgment of the limitations on methodology and present knowledge. The cautious claims being extended no doubt reflect in some degree the fact that the social sciences as “new” disciplines have not yet achieved the status of other disciplines in British universities. And they also reflect the nature of this particular group. Yet whatever the cause, the disposition to delimit the social sciences did reduce the areas in which sharp conflict was likely to arise.

Although there were many important issues on which there was extended discussion which cannot be reported in detail here, a theme to which the conference returned again and again was the nature of objectivity in the social

sciences, where experimentation under problems here substantially different from those in most of the natural sciences, where experimentation under carefully controlled conditions is possible, was generally acknowledged. In turn, there was a good deal of sympathy for the thesis put forward in an early address by Arnold Nash that every social scientist is to a degree engaged in theologizing and that his presuppositions color in a marked degree the nature and objectivity of his work. Yet there was not agreement that such a thesis said all that needed to be said. There are, it was argued, technical judgments unaffected by theological presuppositions, and there is a common allegiance to a vigorous and critical discipline through which facts are ascertained and which provides a common meeting ground for men of all persuasions. There are, in the words of Ronald Preston, "neutral facts" which can be used by anyone, including the Christian; only as one moves beyond these facts to speak on policy or to generalize on the nature of man does distortion occur. Furthermore, some insisted, presuppositions are not themselves static, but are affected by facts and findings revealed; the pattern is one of interaction, not a chain reaction of cause and effect. The Conference did not settle the problem of objectivity, but it did open avenues for a continuing useful conversation.

The relation of organized religion to the social sciences was also a matter of considerable concern. The failure of the Church to deal adequately with the problems of man in society was offered as

an important impetus to the growth of the social sciences. The churches were accused of failing to be open to the development of the social sciences — not standing hostile and in open combat as in the case of Darwinism but rather ignoring and being suspicious and overly critical and thus hindering the development of the social sciences. In turn, the churches were criticized for failing to appropriate the valuable array of facts unearthed about the functioning of man which could profitably be employed in their own life and thought and in their concerns for society — for short-circuiting social analysis in making social pronouncements derived from doctrine and insight alone. There were rejoinders and defences, but an annoying criticism remained.

For reasons already noted, the Conference ended without expression of sharply contradicting views on the nature of man, human freedom, moral decision, social manipulation of human beings, and comparable issues which commonly arise. This does not mean, as Canon Demant pointed out in his summary, that differences do not exist; they did not exist at the Conference, but with a different set of social scientists and different theologians, sharper conflict might have arisen.

It is of subsidiary interest to note that the Conference was held in an experimental college less than ten years old. Patterned in many ways after an American liberal arts college, North Staffordshire provides a challenge to the established specialism of the traditional and red-brick universities of Great



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Britain. One session of the Conference was devoted to the program of the college and much informal discussion centered on issues in higher education with which this new enterprise is attempting to cope.

### CONFERENCE OF PROTESTANT COLLEGE TRUSTEES AND PRESIDENTS

Some five hundred presidents and trustees from the nations's Protestant church-related colleges are scheduled to meet at Lake Junaluska, North Carolina, June 28-30. The National Committee of Church Men for Church Colleges has initiated the conference as the first of a series of meetings to study problems facing church-related colleges. Milburn P. Akers is chairman of the committee which was organized in 1956 by two units of the National Council of Churches. A Methodist layman, he is executive editor of the *Chicago Sun-Times*.

Co-hosts for the three-day meeting will be the division of Educational Institutions of the Methodist Board of Education and the Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church, U.S. Conference co-chairmen are Dr. John O. Gross, general secretary of the Methodist board's Division of Educational Institutions, and Dr. Hunter B. Blakely, secretary of the Division of Higher Education of the Presbyterian board. "This will be the first meeting of its kind in the United States as the committee joins with two denominational boards of Christian education," Dr. Gross said.

Conference speakers will include Dr. Theodore A. Distler, Washington, D.C.,

executive director of the Association of American Colleges; Dr. Robert E. Wilson, Chicago, Chairman of the Standard Oil Company of Indiana; the Rev. Dr. John F. Anderson, Jr., Dallas, a trustee of Austin College, Sherman, Texas; Dr. Gross; and Mr. Akers. Delegates will participate in informal discussions on such topics as training of college trustees, financing the church college, planning trustee meetings, better public relations in church colleges, and relationships between a denomination and its colleges.



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